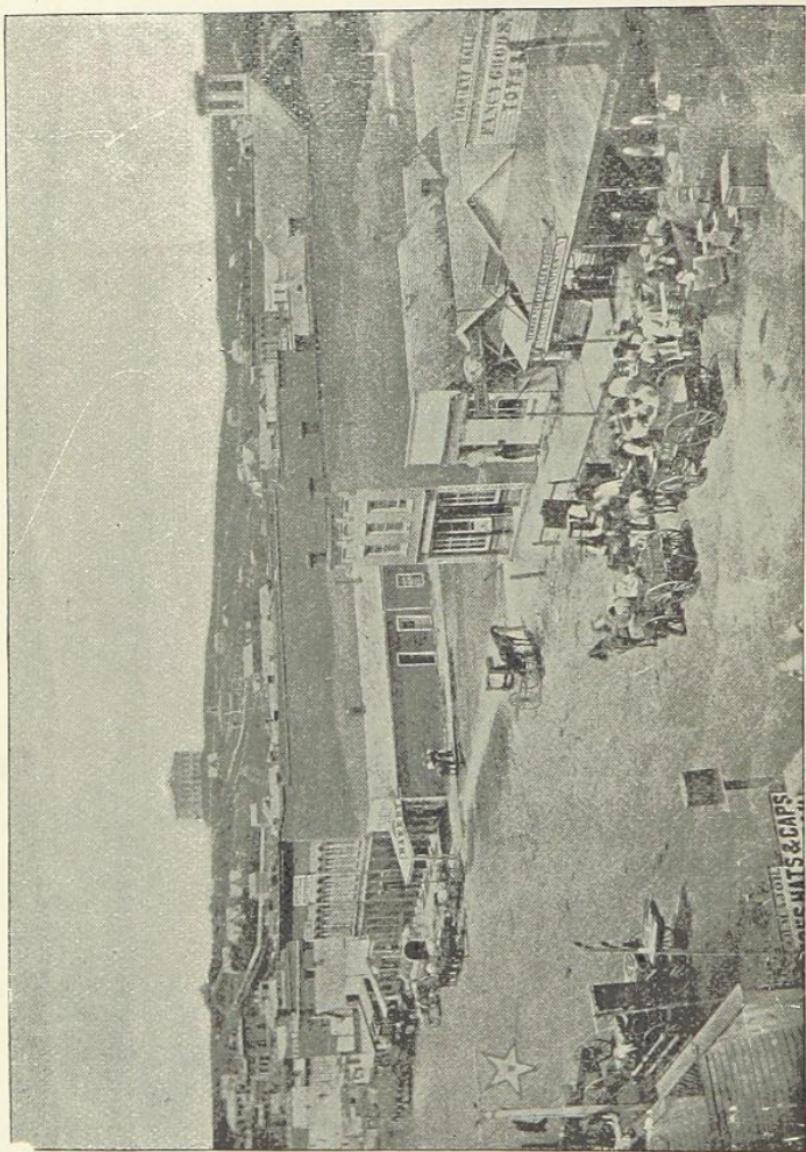


STORIES of OMAHA



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OMAHA IN 1866—View northwest from Twelfth and Farnam; Bakery site of Union Pacific ticket office; Methodist Church site of Omaha National Bank; Territorial Capitol site of High School.

STORIES OF OMAHA

Historical Sketches of the Midland City.

Compiled by

WM. E. BROADFIELD.



OMAHA, NEB.:
NICHOLS & BROADFIELD,
1898

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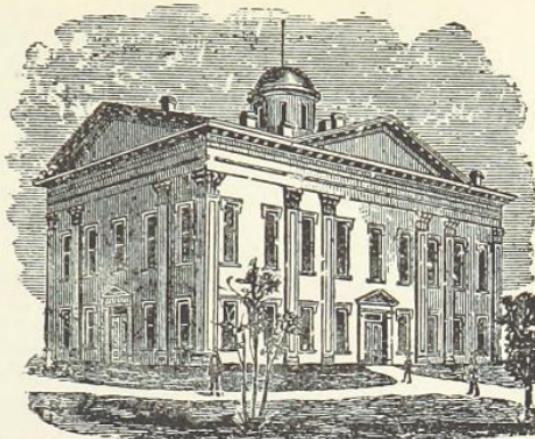
F. B. Nichols.

CONTENTS.

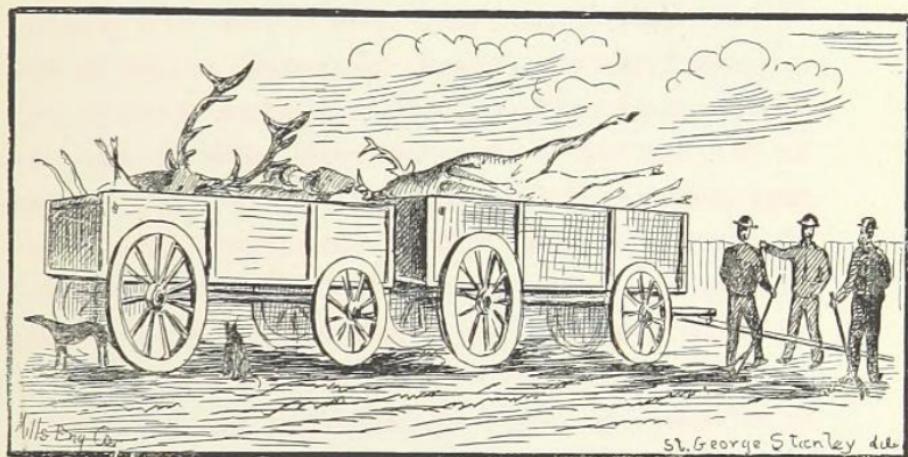
CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Land of Quivera, - - - -	7
II.	“Louisiana,” - - - -	13
III.	The Coming of the Home-Loving Race, - - - -	16
IV.	The Lewis and Clark Expedition, - - - -	20
V.	Settlement of the Missouri Valley, - - - -	24
VI.	Nebraska as a Territory, - - - -	28
VII.	“Lone Tree Ferry,” - - - -	31
VIII.	Founding the City, - - - -	34
IX.	First Fourth-of-July Celebration, - - - -	39
X.	An Editor’s Dream, - - - -	42
XI.	Possessing the Land, - - - -	47
XII.	Locating the Capitol, - - - -	51
XIII.	Moral Suasion, - - - -	59
XIV.	In Steamboating Days, - - - -	65
XV.	Naming the Streets, - - - -	75
XVI.	Early Schools, - - - -	80
XVII.	Establishing the Telegraph, - - - -	88
XVIII.	Indian Scares and the Rebellion, - - - -	90
XIX.	The First Trans-Continental Railroad, - - - -	97
XX.	Modern Omaha, - - - -	109

STORIES OF OMAHA.

THIS work is published with a view to a popular understanding of many interesting events in the settlement of the great trans-Mississippi country and in the founding of this important midland city. It may answer in a measure questions the young people of today and new-comers, particularly Exposition visitors, will naturally ask. All history is necessarily a repetition of many things known to a few, but which are dimly outlined in the minds of the many, so it is to the many we wish to speak. Care has been taken to devote these pages to the doings of the great respectable common people in their home-seeking and supremacy over the red men fast fading away.

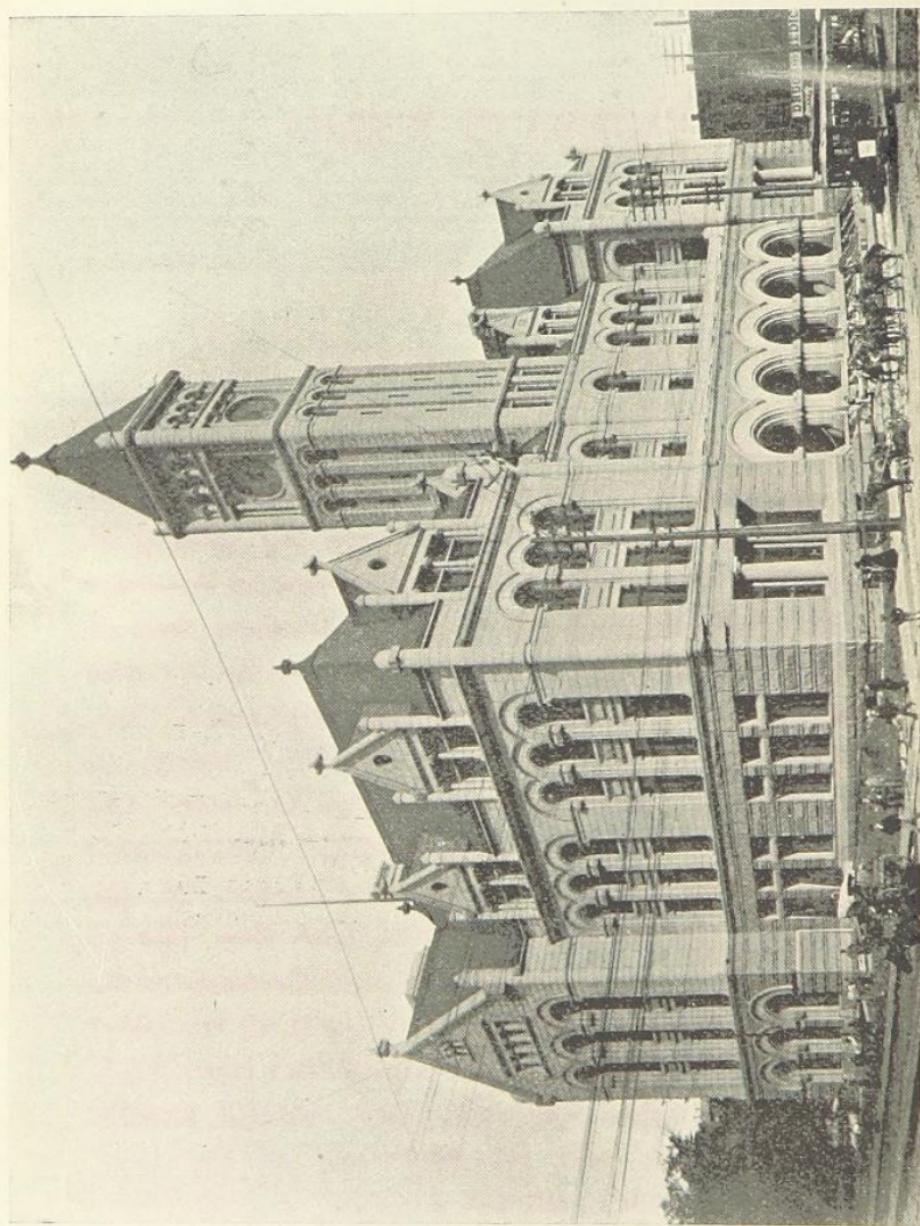


TERRITORIAL CAPITOL.
Formerly standing on High School Grounds, Omaha.



SCENE ON NEBRASKA PLAINS IN EARLY DAYS.
Sketch made during the building of the Union Pacific Railroad.





NEW POSTOFFICE AND FEDERAL COURT BUILDING, OMAHA.

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MUSEUM

STORIES OF OMAHA.

CHAPTER I.

THE LAND OF QUIVERA.

THE story of Nebraska begins with the conquest of Mexico. It was soon after the days of Montezuma, and about fifty years after the landing of Columbus, that one Coronado flourished as governor of the northern part of Mexico. Coronado was of a noble Spanish family, and, like many of the young grandees of his day, burned with zeal for conquest and wealth in the New World. During his residence in the northern provinces he heard the story of the "Seven Cities of Cibola." These were described as teeming with wealth, located to the northwest in the land which is now New Mexico and Arizona. In the spring of 1540 Coronado fitted out an expedition and started in quest of the famed cities. To his chagrin and disgust they were found to be mere hamlets containing little metallic wealth. An Indian then told the adventurer of the Land of Quivera, to the northeast, a country of vast riches, ruled over by a gray-haired king, Tartarrax. In

this land the people ate from silver plates. There was a river in the domain of the aged king so wide it seemed like an arm of the sea, upon whose capacious bosom floated canoes of twenty oars, the vessels adorned with gold. The Mississippi and its tributaries were no doubt well known by legend to the Indians of the continent, and these wonderful streams with the great lakes could easily form the convenient story, which the Indians themselves in part believed, that would carry the restless European invaders out of their home country, where they lived in comparative peace. Let the new-comers and their noisy weapons betake themselves to the wild, war-like nations of the north. It is supposed the Indian offered himself as a sacrifice to carry the Spaniards away from his home. Coronado, with the informant as his guide, after a brief rest in the Pecos Valley, marched hundreds of miles to the northeast. The expedition, of several hundred men, traversed the plains for three months, passing the 40th parallel of latitude, which marks the southern boundary of Nebraska. A private of the little army, one Castaneda, kept the journal, and interestingly describes the American bison or buffalo, then seen by the Europeans for the first time :

“They are as large as our oxen, but their horns are not so great. They have a great bunch upon their fore shoulders and more hair upon their fore part than upon their hinder part, and it is like wool. They have, as it were, a horse mane upon their back bone and

much hair and very long from their knees down. They have great tufts of hair hanging down from their foreheads and it seemeth that they have beards because of the great store of hair hanging down at their chins and throats. In some respects they resemble the lion and in some others the camel. They push with their horns, they run, they overtake and kill a horse when they are in their rage and anger. Finally, it is a foul and fierce beast of countenance and form of body. The horses fled from them either because of their deformed shape or else because they had never seen them. Their masters have no other riches nor substance; of them they eat, they drink, they apparel, they shoe themselves; and of their hides they make many things as houses, shoes, apparel and ropes. To be short they make so many things of them as they have need of or as many as suffice them in the use of this life."

Coronado, his lieutenant Jaramillo, and their men, after the three months of marching concluded the guide had deceived them. The Indian acknowledged his deception, and soon met his death. After a halt of nearly a month the Spaniards retraced their steps to Mexico. It would seem from later history that the Indian's story had some semblance of truth for later Spanish expeditions tell of large cities that were found. The Indian's sacrifice was the first record of the dedication of life on Nebraska soil in defense of the home, a land which some three hun-

dred years later was "dedicated to free soil, free labor and free men."

In 1599, another half century having given time for the further repetition of stories of wealth in the north to the Spaniards in Mexico, another adventurer, Onato by name, endeavored to find the Land of Quivera, but we only know of his outset from the ancient town of Santa Fe, New Mexico, and his return thither. Onato probably lacked a man of letters in his party to preserve to the world his adventure.

In 1662 the Count of Penalosa started out from Santa Fe to search for the fabled country. His chronicler was Nicholas de Freytas, his chaplin. Like the Coronado expedition of one hundred and twenty-two years before, they marched for three months through a country with scenes "so agreeable that not in all the Indies of Peru, and New Spain, nor in Europe have any other such been seen so delightful and pleasant." The story of Nicholas de Freytas is that the Count of Penalosa and his band came upon some three thousand natives, ("Escauzaques" he calls them) with whom they made an alliance with a view of conquering the inhabitants of Quivera. Natives and invaders proceeded north together and one evening came in sight of a large city at the junction of two rivers. The Spaniards encamped and were given orders to await the morning when they would endeavor to make terms with the natives, but, the priest relates, the Escauzaques made a raid upon the city

in the night, killing all who did not escape. Little mineral wealth was found. Much pottery declares the natives to have been of a higher civilization than the Indians with which the settlers of the past century have had to deal. Judge Savage, a historian of much learning, reasons that the city of Columbus, situated at the Junction of the Loup River with the Platte, is in the locality described by de Freytas. Farmers in the vicinity frequently plow up pottery of a by-gone age. The unfortunate natives were not of a metallic country, accounting for the absence of gold and silver. Their's was a place where the making of pottery entered largely into their life. The lay of the land as described by the ancient writer also gives much reason for the investigator to believe the Platte Valley at this point to have been the scene of the adventure by the Count of Penalosa and his men. The Indians of whom the first chronicler Castaneda speaks, whose wants were completely filled by the hide and carcass of the buffalo, we are led to believe, were the mortal enemies of these cousins of Aztecs, and finally drove them into the castled mountains of the southwest. As the light of these gentle barbarians was about to be extinguished under the sunset skies an overruling Providence was reclaiming the eastern shores of the continent with a hardy race of men, whose test of civilization was home and motherhood, their guide the Savior born at Bethlehem.

The stories of the search for "the Land of

Quivera" will ever remain a part of Nebraska's history. The Knights of Ak-sar-ben, composed of many of the citizens of Omaha, who aim at pleasant relaxation and the good of the community at the same time, have done much to popularize the study of the early history of Nebraska. There is a fringe of glory in the past from which many a homely truth may be learned. It is only the vicious who do not care for the past or of the future. The devout student of history becomes the well-balanced citizen and his work enduring.

CHAPTER II.

“LOUISIANA.”

FOLLOWING the Spaniards the French became enthusiastic explorers of the interior of the new continent. By reason of the English settlement of the larger part of the Atlantic seaboard the efforts of the sons of France were confined to the vallies of the Mississippi and the St. Lawrence. Father Marquette with remarkable missionary zeal penetrated the wilderness from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi even in advance of men whose only thought was commercial gain. In 1673 Marquette sailed down the Mississippi passing the point where the Missouri pours its muddy waters into the great wide river whose clearer waters come from rocky bluffs amid the beautiful scenery of which the missionary first floated on the “Father of Waters.” The Missouri on the other hand flowing through a rich, loose soil carries with it its mark of wealth that attracted the attention even of this first explorer so accustomed to strange sights. He writes, “As we were discoursing, sailing quietly down a still, clear water, we heard the noise of a rapid, into which we were about to plunge. I have never seen anything more frightful; a mass of large trees, with roots and branches forming real

floating islands, came rushing from the mouth of the River Pekatanoni with such impetuosity that we could not venture across without serious risk. The agitation was so great that the water was all muddy and could not get clear." He further says, "Pekatanoni is a considerable river which coming very far in the northwest empties into the Mississippi. Many Indian towns are situated on this stream, and I hope by its means to make the discovery of the Red or California Sea."

The voyagers evidently passed the mouth of the Missouri during a flood time. The great river has ever been designated a tributary of the Mississippi because of its own peculiarity and the continued similarity of the greater stream, though it has been a rule of geography that the longer branch bears the name. Marquette's map of his explorations gives the Indian name Pekatanoni to our Missouri River and its fertile valley. The Indians informed the missionary of the course of the river, which is drawn with remarkable accuracy. The Platte River (to the Indians known as Ne-bras-ka "shallow water") is shown in almost its exact location. The map gives the names of the Indian tribes of the Missouri Valley, the Panas (Pawnees), the Otantes (Otoes), and the Mahas (Omahas; "above all others on the river.") So we find the origin of the word Omaha was placed upon one of the first maps of the New World. Marquette's map, we are told, was long lost and finally

found after lying concealed for generations in an old desk in St. Mary's College, Montreal.

Sieur Robert Cavalier de la Salle, a French trader, followed up the discoveries of his countryman, and in 1683 descended the Mississippi to the sea, taking the adjacent territory in the name of his king, Louis the Great, it being a law of the times that the sovereign of the discoverer became the ruler of the country discovered. "Louisiana" it was named in honor of the king. During the next hundred years French traders and "voyageurs" ventured now and then into the wilderness. Their trading posts and forts gave the names to places that have since become great cities. The narrow streets of the French settlements are still characteristic of the older portions of such cities as St. Louis and St. Joseph, Missouri.

The first exploration of the plains from the Missouri River westward is supposed to have been made by a party of eight French Canadians headed by two brothers, Peter and Paul Mallet. Their object was to reach Santa Fe overland and establish commercial relations with New Mexico. It is spoken of, considering the number of the party, as a most daring venture. The explorers returned safely, but the vast plains and national jealousies prevented the opening of the trade they sought. In 1762 Spain took possession of Louisiana. The French and Indian war had been settled in favor of England and her colonies, leaving France shorn of prestige in America for a time.

CHAPTER III.

THE COMING OF THE HOME-LOVING RACE.

FRANCE and Spain jealous of each other's supremacy in the Mississippi Valley and western America were finally compelled to give way to the sturdy race from northern Europe to whom the climate was congenial. With all his native shrewdness Napoleon was long learning that races to whom ice and snow are as the renewal of life are practically unconquerable by a race from the south. It took the now seafaring Anglo-Saxon two centuries or more to arrive on the ground first trod by the Spaniards, but they proved to be builders and permanent settlers, with a love of freedom and the individual home that made their outposts the forerunners of cosmopolitan toleration and liberty. The American branch of the family had gone to housekeeping for itself. Nation-building and parliaments were characteristic of this race with a desire for world-wide suffrage. Washington, a political seer of surpassing wisdom had brought the colonies to a just realization of their importance in international affairs. His mantle had fallen on Jefferson and the vigor of the young statesman in holding the avenues of the Republic to the use of her citizens shows an appreciation of the responsibilities

of the new nation. Young the country might be, yet her people were old in the evolution of civilization. Napoleon, in his thirst for conquest, in 1800 obtained secret possession of Louisiana. The settlers of Kentucky and other portions of the Ohio Valley at once realized the meaning of aggressive ownership of the great territory lying to the west. Spain's control of the land had been fraught with hardships; but the mere thought of perpetual warfare with France agitated the public mind to stern action. Jefferson was the man for the hour. Napoleon's denial and temporizing as to the transfer of Louisiana by Spain to France was met by a vigorous investigation. Rufus King, American Minister to England, finally decided that the cession by Spain had in fact been made. Jefferson wrote a letter to Mr. Livingston, our Minister to France, bristling with warning to Napoleon. The drift of history could hardly be better shown:

“There is on the globe one single spot the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market; and from its fertility it will ere long yield more than half of our whole produce, and contain more than half of our inhabitants. France, placing herself at that door, assumes to us the attitude of defiance. Spain might have retained it quietly for years. Her pacific dispositions, her feeble state, would induce her to increase our facilities there, so that her possession of the place

would be hardly felt by us, and it would not, perhaps, be very long before some circumstance might arise which would make the cession of it to us the price of something of more worth to her. Not so can it ever be in the hands of France; the impetuosity of her temper, the energy and restlessness of her character, placed in a point of eternal friction with us; and our character which though quiet and loving peace and the pursuit of wealth, is high-minded, despising wealth in competition with insult and injury, enterprising and energetic as any nation on earth—these circumstances render it impossible that France and the United States can continue friends when they meet in so irritating a position. They, as well as we, must be blind if they do not see this, and we must be very improvident if we do not begin to make arrangements on that hypothesis. The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low water mark. It seals the union of two nations, who, in conjunction, can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation. We must turn all our attention to a maratime force, for which our resources place us on very high ground; and having formed and connected together a power which may render reinforcement of her settlements here impossible to France, make the first cannon which shall be fired in Europe the signal for tearing up any settlement she may have made, and

for holding the two continents of America in sequestration for the common purposes of the British and American nations."

This second declaration of independence had its effect. Napoleon, withstood by England and Germany in his dreams of universal empire, prepared to keep the peace with the young republic, ceding Louisiana to the United States for \$15,000,000, and December 20, 1803, our flag was hoisted at New Orleans. "Louisiana" included the present states of Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota west of the Mississippi, a large portion of Kansas, all of Nebraska, the two Dakotas, part of Colorado, and Wyoming, the whole of Idaho, Montana and Washington and part of the Indian Territory. A narrow trail across a portion of this territory, the Union Pacific railroad, recently sold for more than four times the purchase price of Louisiana. The amalgamation of races in this territory since then is one of the wonders of history. The plodding honesty of northern peoples and the grace and love of art of those of southern lands is here making the home of the cosmopolitan man.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION.

PEACEABLE possession of Louisiana having been the result of American efforts to keep her borders clear of warring nations, the Nineteenth century opened up bright with possibilities. President Jefferson recommended to Congress the immediate scientific exploration of the new territory. In the spring of 1804 the expedition started from the little village of St. Louis, Missouri, under command of Captain Meriwether Lewis, with William Clark as his lieutenant, to map out for the American people this strange country, known only to the world in a dim, mysterious way. The interior of Africa is now better known than the land in which we now dwell was understood less than a century ago. The boats of the party entered the mouth of the Missouri near St. Louis the 4th of May, 1804. The journal of the expedition records the arrival at the mouth of the Platte River in the month of July. Several days were spent on the present site of the town of Bellevue. The plateaus on which Omaha is now built arrested the attention of the party. The journal says:

“July 27.— * * At ten and a half miles from our encampment we saw and examined a curious collec-

tion of graves or mounds, on the south side of the river. Not far from a low piece of land and a pond, is a tract of about two hundred acres in extent, which is covered with mounds of different heights, shapes and sizes; some of sand, and some of both earth and sand; the largest being near the river. These mounds indicate the position of the ancient village of the Ottoes, before they retired to the protection of the Pawnees."

Indian mounds were a distinctive feature of the Omaha plateaus before settlement. Ten and a half miles on their journey up the river from the camp on Bellevue plateau makes calculation easy as to the site of the ancient Otoe village, the inhabitants of which were compelled to seek alliance with the Pawnees for protection from the Omahas of the upper river country. "The south side of the river" mentioned in the journal, is evidence that the Missouri's channel deviated from its present course; probably running in the direction of Lake Manawa.

An Indian runner had been dispatched up the river to arrange for a meeting with the natives. The council was held on the spot where Fort Atkinson was afterwards built, the name being later changed to Fort Calhoun. The journal thus describes this council of August 3d, 1804:

"We waited with much anxiety the return of our messenger to the Ottoes. Our apprehensions were at last relieved by the arrival of a party of about four-

teen Ottoe and Missouri Indians who came at sunset on the 2d of August, accompanied by a Frenchman who resided among them and interpreted for us. Captains Lewis and Clark went out to meet them and told them that we would hold a council in the morning. In the meantime we sent them some roasted meats, pork, flour and meal, in the return for which they made us a present of watermelons.

"The next morning, the Indians, with their six chiefs, were all assembled under an awning formed with the mainsail, and in the presence of all of our party, paraded for the occasion. A speech was then made announcing to them the change in the government, our promises of protection, and advice as to their future conduct. All the six chiefs replied to our speech, each in his turn, according to rank. They expressed their joy at the change in the government, their hopes that we would recommend them to their great father (the President) that they might obtain trade and necessaries. They wanted arms as well for hunting as defence, and asked our mediation between them and the Mahas (Omahas), with whom they are now at war. We promised to do so, and we wished some of them to accompany us to that nation, which they declined, for fear of being killed by them. We then proceeded to distribute our presents. * * The incidents just related induced us to give this place the name of Council Bluff. The situation of it is exceedingly favorable for a fort and trading factory, as the

soil is well calculated for bricks, and there is an abundance of wood in the neighborhood, and the air being pure and healthy. It is also central to the chief resorts of the Indians, being one day's journey to the Ottees; one and a half to the great Pawnees; two days from the Mahas; two and a quarter from the Pawnee Loups village; convenient to the hunting grounds of the Sioux, and twenty-five days' journey to Santa Fe. The ceremonies of the council being concluded, we set sail in the afternoon and encamped at the distance of five miles on the south side, where we found the mosquitoes very troublesome."

One of the party, Sergeant Floyd, soon after died on the present site of Sioux City. The burial place has ever since been known as Floyd's Bluff. A monument to the memory of the explorer was erected a few years ago by the citizens of Sioux City. In the fall of 1805 the expedition passed down the Lewis (now the Snake) and Columbia Rivers to the Pacific Ocean. The return was made the next spring, the party arriving at St. Louis September 23, 1806.

CHAPTER V.

SETTLEMENT OF THE MISSOURI VALLEY.

THE "star of empire," of which our forefathers spoke so much, was now hovering over the Mississippi and Missouri valleys, leading the settlers into lands rich with the fertility of ages. In 1805 a Spanish adventurer, Manuel Lesa, camped on the Missouri River north of the Platte on the plateau where the Lewis and Clark expedition had rested the year before. He called it "Bellevue" (a beautiful view). The American Fur Company established a trading post on this table land in 1810 with Francis Deroin in charge. Joseph Roubideaux, known as "old Joe," the founder of St. Joseph, Missouri, was for some time head of the company's affairs here. John Carbanne held the position from 1816 to 1823. The government established Fort Atkinson in 1819, the name being changed to Fort Calhoun. This fort was evacuated in 1827 or '28 the troops camping one winter on an island near the site of Omaha; Camp Crogan it was called. Colonel Leavenworth, in command, removed the troops next spring to the point since known as Fort Leavenworth. An old fortification stood for many years near the intersection of Ninth street and

Capitol avenue which was something of a curiosity to the earliest settlers, some supposing it to have been the remains of Camp Crogan. Father de Smet, one of the earliest missionaries of the Missouri Valley country, in a letter to the Omaha Old Settlers' Association said of the old fort: "A noted trader, by the name of T. B. Roye, had a trading post from 1825 till 1828 established on the Omaha plateau, and may be the first white man, who built the first cabin, on the beautiful plateau, where now stands the flourishing city of Omaha."

A settlement was made on the Iowa side of the river opposite the Omaha plateau, about this time. This settlement long went by the name of Trader's Point. Being situated on low ground the original site has long since been washed away by the shifting channel of the Missouri. Bellevue, however, long maintained supremacy as the chief center of activities. Colonel Peter A. Sarpy took charge of the American Fur Company's post here in 1823, succeeding Joseph Roubideaux, holding the position until 1855. He was looked upon as the leader in affairs in this section during his time. Indians from all sections were drawn hither. It was the beginning of the department store and the bargain counter in these parts. Colonel Sarpy had an Indian wife, Nokome, of the tribe of the Omahas. She is said to have had much influence among her tribe, on several occasions saving the agent from the vengeance of his copper-colored customers.

The Omaha Indians had long been located on the upper Missouri near the mouth of the Niobrara. The powerful Sioux about the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition, began to dominate the northern plains, driving the Omahas southward. The Omahas in turn compelled the weaker tribe of Otoes to ally themselves with the Pawnees of the southwest. The appearance of the traders was the beginning of the end for the Indian. Incessant warfare, allied with firearms and whisky, made short work of clearing the plains of the red men. Small-pox added to the ravages. Chief Blackbird of the Omahas was a steadfast friend of the whites and it was largely due to him that no general massacre marked the early days in this locality, the funeral rites being mainly conducted among the Indians. Blackbird was so impressed with the enterprise of the whites that when he was about to die he commanded that his body should be mounted astride his favorite horse on a high bluff overlooking the Missouri River that his spirit might behold the growing traffic in the Missouri Valley. The burial place of Blackbird is said to have been a bluff on the upper Missouri, though a modern contention strives to fix the locality in the southeastern limits of Omaha.

Lucien Fontenelle, a Frenchman from New Orleans, married an Omaha belle, his wife and children receiving treatment far superior to that accorded the wife and young of the time. The children were edu-

cated in St. Louis, and the oldest boy, Logan, became chief of the Omahas. The Fontenelles made their home at Bellevue, on the bluffs above which town Logan Fontenelle was buried, at the age of thirty, having met his death while battling with the Sioux during a hunting expedition in 1855. It was this young chief who signed for the Omahas the treaty extinguishing the Indian title to Nebraska in 1854. The Omaha reservation was fixed in northeastern Nebraska. Many of the descendants of the tribe are now prosperous farmers and readers of agricultural literature.

No history of the settlement of the Missouri Valley would be complete without mention of the missionary efforts at Bellevue. In 1834, Rev. Moses Merrill, a Baptist, established a mission among the Otoes here. The missionary dying the next year, the work was taken up by the Presbyterian Board of Missions sending Rev. John Dunbar and Samuel Allis. Their mission was established at Council Point, near the present station of La Platte, but soon after moved to the near-by trading station of Bellevue. The present Presbyterian college at Bellevue is an out-growth of this early mission.

CHAPTER VI.

NEBRASKA AS A TERRITORY.

NEBRASKA was organized as a territory on the 30th day of May, 1854. The decades immediately preceding and following this date were probably the most stirring and exciting times known in the history of the United States. Morally and physically the whole country was in a state of unrest. Morally, the public conscience was agitated against the growing traffic in slaves. And also morally as well as physically, the opening of the West for settlement had fired the ambition of every intelligent American to own a home of his own. The physical side of the public unrest was heightened by inventions the like of which had scarcely been dreamed of. Steamboats, railroads and telegraph wires made the settlement of the Mississippi Valley comparatively easy. Steamers now regularly plying the Missouri, and venturesome men were ascending the Platte River to the mountains and to California. General John C. Fremont, afterwards known as the "Pathfinder," had, in 1842, headed an expedition up the Platte Valley for the purpose of government survey. A scheme was now on foot for the organization of Kansas as a territory with the

Platte River as its northern boundry. To this the people of Iowa protested. An unorganized Indian territory along a large portion of their western border would prove detrimental to their state. Finally the Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed by Congress, organizing two territories, making the 40th parallel the southern boundary of Nebraska.

Now that the strife is over and the bitterness of the times has no part in our national life it is a matter of interesting history to the young people of Nebraska to know that a few words in the bill organizing Nebraska resulted in the overthrow of slavery. The advocates of slavery were in control of the government at this time. In framing the Kansas-Nebraska bill a clause was inserted making it optional with the people of these new territories whether they should or should not enter the Union as slave states. This annulled the "Missouri compromise" which made Missouri a slave state with the understanding that no other territory north of what was known as the slave line should be organized as slave territory. The object of the Kansas-Nebraska bill was to make Kansas a slave state, and possibly Nebraska and all the new West. A wave of indignation ran over the free states. People who had been passive now became bitter enemies of slavery. In New England a company was organized for the colonization of Kansas with people opposed to slavery, to secure its admission as a free state. The united anti-slavery forces finally elected

Lincoln President. The slave states attempting to set up a government of their own, were overwhelmingly defeated. Had they succeeded, the work of the founders of the republic in preserving the American continent to a united people would have been swept away. At the present time the people of the old slave states are more loyal if possible than those of the north. In all these trying times Nebraska, an innocent party to the discussion and events, was rapidly undergoing settlement, in comparative peace, far removed from the scenes of conflict.

Nebraska Territory when organized extended from the present southern boundary (the 40th parallel) to the British Possessions, and from the Missouri River to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. In 1861 the territory of Colorado was organized taking a large strip of Nebraska and other territory. Later in the same year Dakota Territory was set off from Nebraska, and Washington and Utah received under her government. In 1863 Nebraska was reduced to her present limits, and made preparations for statehood, being admitted into the Union in 1867.

CHAPTER VII.

THE "LONE TREE FERRY."

TRAVEL up the Missouri Valley and across the state of Iowa to the river increased very rapidly during the early "fifties." The Mormon migration had set in in 1847. In 1845 these people were compelled to leave their stronghold, the beautiful city of Nauvoo on the Mississippi River, the state of Illinois revoking their charter. Utah becoming their promised land by vote of their prophets, Mormon caravans were frequently passing over the prairies of Iowa and up the Platte Valley. The discovery of gold in California augmented the general excitement of the times to fever heat. Kaneville, as Council Bluffs was known, rapidly became a thriving frontier town. The Mormons had attempted to establish a temporary settlement as winter quarters on the Nebraska side of the river, on the site of Florence. On complaint of the Indians that they were destroying the timber the Indian agent compelled the Mormons to recross the river into Iowa. The Mormon camp was then known as Winter Quarters. Another name was Miller's Hills in honor of a Mormon elder. Afterwards the town took the name of Kaneville, honoring

Colonel Kane, a brother of the Arctic explorer, and a popular man both among the Mormons and federal authorities. During the impending war with Mexico at the time Colonel Kane had raised a Mormon battalion for service. Near Kaneville was the settlement of Trader's Point and also the Council Bluffs post-office. All mail for the vicinity was addressed to this postoffice and finally Council Bluffs became the settled name of the thriving town.

The town of Kaneville in 1854 contained a large number of people who had set out for the gold fields of California, but realizing the dangers and hardships of the journey more fully than when starting from their Eastern homes, and all sorts of employment being plentiful, they decided to settle and make their homes in these parts. The Pawnee Indians and other tribes of western Nebraska were not so friendly to the whites as the Omahas, and massacres were frequent. The opening of Nebraska to settlement was now a matter of feverish interest to the people of Iowa's frontier town. A claim across the river would be the surest way to secure a home and wealth. All eyes turned to the Omaha plateau. William D. Brown, from Mount Pleasant, Iowa, had established a ferry at this point. Mr. Brown started for California in '49, but finding his new enterprise profitable concluded to remain in the business, notwithstanding the competing ferries at Bellevue and Florence. His license was obtained from the Potta-

wattamie County authorities. The ferry was a flat boat rowed with oars; the point of arrival and departure a lone tree near where the Union Pacific shops are located, giving the name of "Lone Tree Ferry" to the locality. This ferry landed near the foot of Webster street, and connected with the comparatively easy grade to what became the "military road." It was the best connecting link between the thriving Iowa towns and the Platte Valley road, and the "Lone Tree Ferry" soon became popular. The wide strip of bottom land between Omaha and Council Bluffs now became, and was for years after, the camping grounds of innumerable wagon trains, resting, the jumping off place into the unknown Great American desert.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOUNDING THE CITY.

THE town of Omaha was organized in the summer of 1854 immediately following the passage of the organic act by Congress creating Nebraska Territory. In the preceding chapters we have been interested in following the events that called the attention of the world to Nebraska soil. The establishment of a ferry attracted the attention of the people on the Iowa side of the river to the possibilities of a city on the great plateaus on the Nebraska side as soon as the territory should be organized. To Mr. Brown, proprietor of the ferry, is accorded the honor of being Omaha's first permanent resident. From the nature of his business he was much on the coveted land, and laid out a claim covering a large portion of the town site. The necessity of a steam ferry to meet the increasing business resulted in the organization of the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company. The members of this company, besides Mr. Brown, were Dr. Enos Lowe, Joseph H. D. Street, S. S. Bayliss, Jesse Williams, Samuel R. Curtis, C. H. Downs, Tootle & Jackson, and others. Organization was effected July 23d, 1853. Dr. Lowe, president of the company at

once took steps to purchase a steam ferry boat and secured the "General Marion," plying at Alton, Ill. The members of the ferry company were naturally interested in the projected town site and became most active in the affairs of the new town.

When the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company was incorporated, under the laws of Iowa, no name had been selected for the proposed town and the word "Nebraska" was coupled to "Council Bluffs" in the naming of the company. To Jesse Lowe, a younger brother of the Doctor is given the credit of proposing the name "Omaha City" in honor of the friendly tribe. The Lowe brothers now became active leaders in affairs, Jesse securing a claim on what is now Walnut Hill.

A. D. Jones, then a young surveyor employed about Kaneville, maintains that he secured the first claim on the site of Omaha. Mr. Jones says:

"It was in November, 1853, that I came to the conclusion that it was time to make a strike on the Nebraska side of the river, and I accordingly made a proposition to Thomas and William Allen to cross the river and take up some claims. The Allens were sub-contractors in the construction of the grade for the Council Bluffs and Nebraska Ferry Company. They agreed with me, and procuring a scow from William D. Brown we made the trip. We camped out that night, and early the next morning we started out to mark our claims. With a hatchet I blazed a corner

tree near our camp and stamped the initials of my name therein with a survey marking-iron. I then blazed lines north to the point now occupied by Herman Kountze's residence, thence south to C. F. Goodman's present place, which I wished to include in my claim as it was a very prominent location. I next marked a corner on the ridge east of Tenth street, and thence proceeded eastward, blazing live trees, until I reached a deep ravine heavily timbered with tall trees. I gave the name of Purgatory to the valley by which name it was long afterwards known. In the lower end of the ravine I discovered a bed of excellent building stone of lime formation. Upon regaining the plateau I located my forth corner, and marked a line along the margin of the plateau to the place of beginning. The next step was to lay my claim foundations, which was regularly done, in compliance with all the requisites for making good and valid claim according to the laws and customs among squatters in other new sections of the public domain. Meantime the Allens each marked out a claim, after which we returned to Council Bluffs. I claim that this was probably the first survey ever made in Douglas County."

Mr. Hepner, the Indian agent, ordered all claims vacated until the extinguishment of the Indian title by law. Mr. Jones resorted to strategy to hold his claim to Park Wild, as he called it. Application was made through J. D. Test, of Council Bluffs for Mr.

Jones' appointment as postmaster of the new town. The correspondence is interesting at this time:

WASHINGTON CITY, May 6, 1854.

DR. TEST—Yours of the 10th ultimo relative to Omaha City postoffice has been received. I got the office established to-day, and had A. D. Jones appointed postmaster. Yours truly,

BERNHART HENN.

WASHINGTON CITY, May 6, 1854.

A. D. JONES, Omaha City, Nebraska Ter.

Dear Sir—Yours of the 15th ult. has been received, but as the post-route bill has already received final action, I cannot carry out your suggestion as to the route from Council Bluffs to Omaha City at this session. Perhaps, however, it is not necessary, as it is already covered by the route I had established last Congress, from Council Bluffs to Fort Laramie, and although said route has not been let, you may get that part in operation by petitioning the Department to do so; which course I would suggest be adopted at once. If you do so, send me the petitions directed to Fairfield, and I will forward them.

Yours truly, BERNHART HENN.

Mr. Jones' commission as postmaster must have been the first letter directed to Omaha City. He was authorized to appoint a carrier to be paid out of

the receipts of the office. As business was not pressing, the postmaster himself carried the mail. Mr. Jones has lived to see one of the largest and most substantial postoffices in the world erected within the city of Omaha.

The ferry company proceeded to lay out the town immediately after the passage of the bill admitting Nebraska as a territory. A. D. Jones and C. H. Downs were employed to make the survey. The plat covered 320 blocks, each block 264 feet square; the streets 100 feet wide, with the exception of Capitol avenue, which was made 120 feet wide, the blocks on either side of this thoroughfare being given no alleys. The lots were made 66 by 162 feet; business lots 22 feet wide. Besides Capitol square and Jefferson square a park of seven blocks, bounded by Eighth, Ninth and Jackson and Davenport streets, was laid out. This tract was afterwards given up for business purposes. Omaha's wide business street are now often commended by travelers.

Council Bluffs was crowded with speculators for months before the passage of the act opening up the new territory for settlement. Claims were immediately made over a large portion of what is now Douglas County, but according to Harrison Johnson, an early historian, "not one in ten of these claims was ever settled upon or improved by the claimant, who held the lands merely for speculative purposes."

CHAPTER IX.

FIRST FOURTH-OF-JULY CELEBRATION.

DURING the progress of the survey the Fourth of July was celebrated by a picnic on the high bluff overlooking the town site, now the High School grounds. Mr. Hadley D. Johnson in an address before the State Historical Society, referring to the event said: "It may be interesting to you to be informed that the first celebration of our nation's birthday of which I have any knowledge as having occurred in Nebraska, took place July 4, 1854 (before any whites were permitted under the treaty to permanently locate on these lands), on the hill at Omaha, near where the capitol building formerly stood, and as near as I can locate it, on a spot now occupied by Davenport street. A small number of persons, on the day just mentioned, crossed the Missouri River from Council Bluffs, taking a few articles for a picnic. I remember that on the spot named some resolutions were adopted and a few brief speeches made. The stand on which the speakers stood was a common wagon owned by my old friend Harrison Johnson, who with some of the members of his family, constituted a portion of the party."

Mr. John Gillespie, commenting on Mr. Hadley Johnson's reminiscence, sent the following to the Lincoln Journal: "Now I wish to add to that brief bit of history of the early days of Nebraska, that the Hon. Hadley Johnson, then reputed to be Nebraska's delegate to Washington, was called upon for a speech. He responded and got up into the only wagon on the ground, that had hauled over the baskets of provisions and two blacksmith's anvils to fire a salute, and after firing the salute he commenced a spread-eagle speech, but had not gotten very far along when the reports of the anvils brought in sight a number of Indians. The women became frightened and baskets and anvils were piled into the wagon and the driver started the team for the ferry—followed by the entire audience. The result was that the speech was never completed, unless the honorable gentleman intended his speech of last evening as the finish. His modesty no doubt prevented him in giving the details. Your writer was one of the crowd present, and remembers offering the following toast:

" 'Nebraska—May her gentle zephyrs and rolling prairies invite pioneers from beyond the muddy Missouri River to happy homes within her borders, and may her lands ever be dedicated to free soil, free labor and free men.'

"There was one log cabin erected on the town site of Omaha on that day. It was built up to the square and no roof upon it. The prairie grass upon the

second bottom, where now Douglas and Farnam streets are, was very high and it was difficult for the ladies to reach 'old' Capitol hill. Your writer remembers meeting A. D. Jones, postmaster, who carried the mail for Omaha in his hat. He said to me, 'Young man, take a claim up there on the hill and it will make you rich some day,' but I could not see it. The town of Omaha had been platted in the month of June preceding, and lots were offered for \$25 each, and the town association offered to deed lots to parties building if they would commence at once. It was that fall Omaha commenced to grow, but on the day of celebration the United States marshal was on the watch to see that no settlers located in Nebraska pending the ratification at Washington of the treaty made with the Indians for the lands bordering on the Missouri River."

CHAPTER X.

AN EDITOR'S DREAM.

THE Omaha Arrow, "a family newspaper, devoted to the arts, sciences, general literature, agriculture, and politics." This was the heading of Omaha's first newspaper, the first number of which was issued July 28th, 1854, shortly after the survey had been completed. It was a four page paper of six wide columns, issued from "Omaha City, Nebraska Territory," though printed in the Bugle office at Council Bluffs. J. E. Johnson and J. W. Pattison were the editors and proprietors. Johnson, the business manager, was practising law in Council Bluffs, and engaged in running a blacksmith shop, an insurance agency, and a merchandising business, there at the same time. Whether the term "blacksmith shop" was a facetious reference to the printing office we are not told. He was a Mormon, with several wives, which no doubt accounts for the necessity of exercising his ingenuity in gathering wealth. Pattison was the editor. The following is from his salutatory:

"Well, stranger, friends, patrons, and the good people generally, wherever in the wide world your lot may be cast, and in whatever clime this Arrow may

reach you, here we are upon Nebraska soil seated upon the stump of an ancient oak, which serves for an editorial chair, and the top of our badly used beaver for a table, we purpose editing a leader for the Omaha Arrow.

"An elevated table land surrounds us; the majestic Missouri just off on our right goes sweeping its muddy course adown towards the Mexican Gulf, whilst the background of the pleasing picture is filled up with Iowa's loveliest, richest scenery. Away upon our left, spreading far away in the distance lies one of the loveliest sections of Nebraska. Yon rich, rolling, wide-spread and beautiful prairie dotted with timber looks lovely enough just now, as heaven's free sunlight touches off in beauty the lights and shades, to be literally entitled the *Eden* land of the world, and inspire us with flights of fancy upon the antiquated beaver, but it won't pay. There sticks our axe in the trunk of an old oak, whose branches have for years been fanned by the breezes that constantly sweep from over the oft-time flower-dotted lea, and from which we purpose making a log for our cabin claim."

Another editorial, a "day-dream," is a vision that was prophetic:

"A NIGHT IN OUR SANCTUM.—Last night we slept in our sanctum—the starry-decked heaven for a ceiling, and Mother Earth for a flooring. It was a glorious night and we were tired from the day's exer-

tions. Far away on different portions of the prairie glimmered the camp fires of our neighbors, the Pawnees, Omahas, or that too often unappreciated class of our people known as pioneers or squatters. We gathered around our little camp fire, talked of times of the past, of the pleasing present, and of the glorious future which the march of civilization would open in the land whereon we sat. The new moon was just sinking behind the distant prairie roll, but slightly dispelling the darkness which crept over our loved and cherished Nebraska land. We thought of distant friends and loved ones who, stretched upon beds of downy ease, little appreciated the unalloyed pleasure, the heaven-blessed comfort, that dwelt with us in this far-off land. No busy hum of the bustling world served to distract our thoughts. Behind us was spread our buffalo robe in an old Indian trail which was to serve as our bed and bedding. The cool night wind swept in cooling breezes around us, deep laden with the perfume of a thousand-hued and varied flowers. Far away upon our lea came the occasional howl of the prairie wolves. Talk of comfort; there was more of it in one hour of our sanctum camp life and of camp life generally upon Nebraska soil, than in a whole life in the fashionable, pampered world in the settlements, and individually we would not have exchanged our sanctum for any of those of our brethren of the press who boast of its neatness and beauty of artful adornment.

"The night stole on, and we in the most comfortable manner in the world—and editors have a faculty of making themselves comfortable together—crept between art and nature—our blanket and buffalo, to sleep and perchance to dream, 'of battles, sieges, fortunes and perils, the imminent breech.' To dream-land we went. The busy hum of business from factories and the varied branches of mechanism from Omaha City reached our ears. The incessant rattle of innumerable drays over the paved streets, the steady tramp of ten thousand of an animated, enterprising population, the hoarse orders fast issued from the crowd of steamers upon the levee loading with the rich products of the state of Nebraska and unloading the species and products of other climes and soils greeted our ears. Far away from toward the setting sun came telegraphic dispatches of improvements, progress and moral advancement upon the Pacific coast. Cars full freighted with teas, silks, etc., were arriving from thence and passing across the stationary channel of the Missouri River with lightning speed hurrying on to the Atlantic seaboard. The third express train on the Council Bluffs and Galveston R.R. came thundering close by us with a shrill whistle that brought us to our feet knife in hand. We rubbed our eyes, looked into the darkness beyond to see the flying trains. They had vanished, and the shrill second neigh of our lariated horses gave indication of the danger near. The hum of business, in

and around the city, had also vanished, and the same rude camp-fires were before us. We slept again, and daylight stole upon us refreshed and ready for another day's labor."

Twelve numbers of the Arrow were printed, the date of last issue being November 10, 1854. A file of the paper is in the Byron Reed collection at the Public Library. It was purchased by Mr. Reed from a resident of Salt Lake City. As a newspaper, the Arrow did not pay; as a curio, this file of it brought \$30.

CHAPTER XI.

POSSESSING THE LAND.

IT was in July of the memorable year 1854 that the first citizens made permanent residence in Omaha City. The ferry company completed the first house, located on Twelfth and Jackson streets. It was given the name "St. Nicholas" and soon after used as a hotel. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. P. Snowden came over from Council Bluffs on July 11th. They were preceded a few hours by Mr. and Mrs. Newell. However, this couple remaining but a few weeks, Mr. and Mrs. Snowden bore the honor of being Omaha's first resident family, and the family name has ever since been an honored one in the annals of the city. The ferry company offered a lot to the first women to locate permanently in the new town, and it was given to Mrs. Snowden. The St. Nicholas Hotel or boarding house was first under the management of this couple. The first religious services were held in this hotel, August 13th, conducted by Rev. Peter Cooper, a Methodist. In the fall of this year the Nebraskan newspaper was established, taking up the work laid down by the publishers of the Arrow. It was the first paper printed within in the city, and was con-

tinued until 1864. The Douglas House, a large frame building, was erected at the corner of Thirteenth and Harney streets, and was opened January 14, 1855, with a grand ball. It continued the leading hotel for a number of years. A. J. Poppleton and O. D. Richardson were the first practising lawyers, and members of the first legislature. Dr. Geo. L. Miller was the first physician, and writes the following reminiscence of his early practise. An Indian summoned the doctor to attend a papoose, and guided him to the tepee: "Exactly how the brave jumped from the path and disappeared in the grass without a word of explanation, not even so much as a grunt; how moments seemed hours that we stood speechless and motionless, 'each particular hair' agitated to the roots, waiting for his return or for death, or for whatever else might come; how he did return, and with a wave of the hand beckoned us to follow on among the wigwams, and how we followed accordingly, not daring to run, until we reached the right one; how Mr. Indian shot through the triangular door, like the arrow from the bow—and how diligently the medicine man struggled to get through the little opening, by main strength and awkwardness, and finally did it; precisely how powerful was the sense of relief from ugly creeping sensations around the head and throat, when a unanimous grunt from two squaws and the three Indians gave him a welcome, with smiles, to a cushion on the ground, as a seat of state; how the

inevitable pipe and kinnikinick was passed from the mouths of the aforesaid Indians (who had just dined on dog soup) to our own; and how sweet was the taste of friendship through its fumes, we cannot stop to particularize. It was the case of a young physician, just out of city life, practising among the Indians for the first time."

The settlement of Omaha began in earnest in the fall of 1854. It was the movement of the home-builders then going on throughout the West that inspired Whittier, the Quaker poet, to pen his famous lines:

I hear the tread of the pioneers
Of nations yet to be.
The onward wash of waves where soon
Shall roll a human sea.

Behind the scared squaw's birch canoe
The steamer smokes and raves,
And city lots are staked for sale
Above old Indian graves.

The Omaha Claim Club was organized in the summer of this eventful year 1854. This club was in the nature of a vigilance committee to protect the settlers from claim "jumpers." The United States land office was opened in Omaha March 17, 1857. On the same day Jesse Lowe, Mayor of Omaha, made the first entry of Nebraska land, 320 acres, the site of Omaha City. The claim club then disbanded. Dur-

ing all the years from 1854 to '57 there was strife for the possession of land, due to the unorganized state of affairs. Selfishness and bitter feeling often ran rife, and encounters resulted. Special claim clubs, old citizens aver, were responsible for the bold acts committed in the name of the parent club. In the border town the lawless element asserted itself, but it is evident that there were many virtuous, self-denying homeseekers who had taken to themselves the injunction imparted to the Israelites of old, "Go up and possess the land and verily thou shalt be fed."

CHAPTER XII.

LOCATING THE CAPITOL.

PRESIDENT Franklin Pierce appointed Francis Burt of South Carolina to be the first governor of Nebraska Territory; Thomas B. Cuming of Iowa, secretary; Fenner Furguson of Michigan, chief justice; James Bradley of Indiana, and Edward R. Hardin of Georgia, associate justices; Mark W. Izard of Arkansas, marshal; and Experience Estabrook of Wisconsin, attorney. Many of these names have a familiar sound to the modern Omaha reader. Governor Burt reached Bellevue, the 6th day of October, 1854, and became the guest of Rev. Wm. J. Hamilton, of the Mission House. The governor arrived in ill health, and had scarcely taken up his official work when he died on October 18, 1854. The duties of the governorship now devolved upon Secretary Cuming, who by virtue of his office became the acting governor. The remains of Governor Burt were sent to the family home, Pendleton, South Carolina, accompanied by his son Armstead Burt and four pall-bearers as a guard of honor. Governor Cuming as his first official act ordered the necessary respects to the late governor. His next proclamation was the order-

ing of a census. Mr. Sorenson in his "History of Omaha" says: "The census was completed November 20, 1854, and showed a total of 2,732 persons in the territory, excluding the Indians, of course. Among these were thirteen slaves. The first formal census of the territory was taken in 1855 in order that a readjustment of legislative representatives might be made. This gave the population as 4,491, of which Douglas County contained 1,028."

During the stay of the officials at Bellevue the Nebraska Palladium and Platte Valley Advocate was removed from St. Marys to Bellevue. St. Marys was a town on the Iowa side of the river opposite Bellevue, long since depopulated. Number 16 of the Palladium is said to have been the first paper printed in Nebraska. A number of the distinguished arrivals were present as the Palladium was about to go to press, Governor Cuming taking the first proof-sheet, and Chief Justice Ferguson reading the proof.

By proclamation of the governor, November 21, 1854, was set as the date for the election of members to the first territorial legislature. Omaha was selected by Governor Cuming as the place of meeting, and January 16th set as the date. The ferry company, anticipating events, had erected a commodious brick building as a "state house," which was donated to the use of the legislature. This structure stood on the west side of Ninth street between Douglas and Farnam, bordering the alley, on the lots now used

as a lumber yard. Bellevue, as the oldest settlement, received first attention as a legislative city, but the mission board holding its lands there at a high figure, Governor Cuming and his staff came on to Omaha. It would be absurd to claim for the first settlers of the city a wholly philanthropic turn of mind, yet it is certain that the liberal, far-seeing spirit of these first citizens of Omaha secured for the place a prestige which has never since departed.

The principal business of this first legislature was to select a permanent location for the capitol. Omaha's contestants were Bellevue, Florence, Fontenelle, Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, Brownville, and several other towns south of the Platte River. Excitement ran high. Numbers of men disappointed at not having secured the first assembling of the legislature in their own town, contiguous to their own town lots, came to Omaha in desperate mood to help win the prize for their locality at any cost. Judge J. M. Woolworth in his "Nebraska in 1857," written in that year, speaking for eye witnesses concerning this mob, says: "They arrayed themselves in the red blankets of the savages and loudly proclaimed their design of breaking up the assembly. At the hour for the convening of the houses, their halls were filled with these excited and desperate men. But before they were aware of it, resolutions assembling the two houses in a joint session were passed; and the moment they had met, the governor entered, and without

prologue, delivered to each member elect the certificate of his election, pronounced his message, and declared the assembly organized, directed each house to withdraw to complete its organization, and vanquished, in half an hour, every design either upon himself or the legislature. It was a time when anything less than the executive energy of Andrew Jackson would have involved the governor in inextricable difficulties, and the territory in anarchy."

The champions of Omaha were O. D. Richardson and T. J. Goodwill in the council and A. J. Poppleton and A. J. Hanscom in the house. Mr. Hanscom being speaker of the house bore the brunt of the fight and though his decisions were not always in accord with modern rules of order, yet they never lacked in vigor and firmness.

The joint resolution locating the capitol at Omaha was finally passed February 22, 1855. The legislature then proceeded to take up further business in comparative peace and order. Humorous stories are told of the members and their interest in their "dear constituents." Many of them had perhaps slept over night in the district they represented. Mr. Sorenson tells that "D. M. Johnson, of Ohio, who was the 'member from Archer,' had a political ambition that knew no bounds. Elated with his success in Nebraska—and wishing to ride two legislative horses at the same time—he obtained ten days' leave of absence, and going down to Kansas he ran for

representative there, and was only defeated by a very close vote. But the fact that non-residents largely made up the first legislature was only one of those incidents which are witnessed in all new countries.

* * * Several members of the legislature were residents of Glenwood, Iowa, where a very deep interest was felt in having the capitol located at Plattsmouth. Some of the members who came from Glenwood failed to vote for Plattsmouth, and at the close of the session an indignation meeting was actually held at Glenwood to call to account 'their representatives for misrepresenting them in the Nebraska legislature.' "

The President having appointed Mark W. Izard governor to succeed the lamented Burt, Governor Izard entered upon his duties February 20, 1855. "The first and only executive ball ever given in Omaha" occurred in January, 1855, in honor of Governor Izard. It was held in the City Hotel, a "new" (all buildings emitted the delicious fragrance of new boards in those days) one story frame structure, on the southwest corner of Eleventh and Harney streets. Dr. Miller years after wrote of this affair:

"Izard was a stately character physically, mentally rather weak, and accordingly felt a lively sense of the dignity with which the appointment clothed him. He had never known such an honor before, and it bore upon him heavily. To the few persons who then constituted the principal population of the city, the governor was careful to intimate a desire to have

his gubernatorial advent suitably celebrated. The facetious and wary Cuming suggested the idea of giving Izard an executive ball. The larger of the two rooms which then constituted the building was the theatre of a scene perhaps the most ludicrous that was ever witnessed in the history of public receptions. The rooms had a single coat of what was then called plastering, composed of a frozen mixture of mud and ice, and a very thin coating at that. The floor was rough and unplaned, very trying to dancers, and not altogether safe for those who preferred the upright position. It had been energetically scrubbed for the occasion. The night being dreadfully cold and the heating apparatus failing to warm the room, the water froze upon the floor and could not be melted by any then known process. Rough cotton-wood boards on either side of the room were substituted for chairs.

"The hour of seven having arrived, the grand company began to assemble. Long before the appointed hour his Arkansas excellency appeared in the dancing hall. He and Jim Orton, 'the band,' of Council Bluffs, reached the scene at about the same moment. The governor was very polite to Jim, who was correspondingly polite to the governor. Governor Izard was the guest of nine ladies who were all that could be mustered even for a state occasion in Omaha. They were Mrs. T. B. Cuming, Mrs. Fenner Ferguson, Mrs. J. Sterling Morton, Mrs. C. B. Smith, Mrs. Fleming Davidson, Mrs. A. J. Hanscom, Mrs.

A. D. Jones, Mrs. S. E. Rogers and Mrs. G. L. Miller. Two of the ladies could not dance, and accordingly their places were supplied by the same number of gentlemen. The governor had a son by the name of James. He was his excellency's private secretary, and wishing to present a high example of style, he came in at a late hour escorting Mrs. Davidson. His bearing was fearfully stately and dignified. He wore a white vest and white kids, as any gentleman would do, but these were put in discordant contrast with the surroundings. Paddock, Poppleton, Cuming, Smith, Morton, Ferguson, Goodwill, Clancy, Folsom, besides a large assemblage of the legislators, attended. The latter crowded around gazing with astonishment upon the large number of ladies in attendance.

"Jim Orton was the solitary fiddler, occupying one corner of the room. The dance opened. It was a gay and festive occasion. Notwithstanding the energetic use of green cottonwood, the floor continued icy. During the dance several fell flat. The supper came off about midnight and consisted of coffee with brown sugar and no milk; sandwiches of peculiar size; dried apple pie; the sandwiches we may observe, were very thick and were made of a singular mixture of bread of radical complexion and bacon.

"The governor, having long lived in a hot climate, stood around shivering in the cold, but buoyed

up by the honors thus showered upon him, bore himself with the most amiable fortitude.

"There being no tables in those days, the supper was passed 'round. At the proper time, the governor, under a deep sense of his own consequence, made a speech, returning his thanks for the high honors done him."

CHAPTER XIII.

MORAL SUASION.

IT should be a matter of pride to the people of Omaha that the first family to locate within her borders were no sooner settled than they opened their house to Sunday services, as we learn from a preceding chapter. From that time to this the gospel of peace has been spreading a love of the good, the true and the beautiful. Omaha like all border towns was the prey of the adventurer. Sunday nor the laws of God or man he had little or no reverence for, making scenes of disorder of common occurrence; but the leaven of good was at work. There was a minister in the first legislature, a resident of Missouri. The story goes that he hurt his influence among Omaha people by voting for another place for the capital; that it was this wounded patriotism that had him removed from his position as chaplain; for had he not been allowed to take his seat and office with the understanding that he was an "Omaha man"; such ingratitude was disgusting, nay, dishonest. And for a preacher to be dishonest! So they reasoned him out of office. To this day it brings tears to the eyes of the oldest inhabitant to refer to the matter. No

doubt the border missionary learned a lesson in keeping clear of town-site speculators.

The legislative halls soon resounded with hymns and prayer as we learn from the following from the pen of George G. Rice, of Council Bluffs, published in the Home Missionary, an Eastern publication, in July, 1855, and entitled an "Appeal for Nebraska": "Yesterday I spent in Omaha City, and preached in the hall of the House of Representatives, having arranged to exchange with the chaplain. Omaha City has been made the capital of Nebraska by the Legislature. It is growing very rapidly, and seems destined to be a place of much importance. There are in the town about forty houses, and, probably, from 150 to 200 inhabitants. A desire is expressed there that your society furnish them a minister. Two eligible lots have been donated for a church edifice, and I hold the deeds for them."

Rev. Reuben Gaylord, of the Congregational Church, Danville, Illinois, visited Omaha in the fall of this year to look up the affairs of his deceased nephew, builder of the second house in the settlement. Mr. Gaylord held services in the "state house" the following Sunday. Impressed with the needs of the place and "feeling that Omaha was a point of great importance" he decided to take up his work here. Mr. Gaylord is referred to as the man who brought Sunday across the Missouri River. Young people, who are now whirled across Iowa in palace cars will read

with interest Mrs. Gaylord's description* of winter travel in the early days before railroads were built across the state:

"Early in December, 1855, we set out on our journey of 300 miles across the state of Iowa. Mr. Gaylord proposed leaving his family till spring, but they preferred to come with him. We traveled in a two-seated carriage with a span of horses. We had been told the roads were unusually good in December and the weather mild. That winter and the next proved to be exceptions. After the first day we encountered rain and mud, then snow and intense cold. It was often difficult to find a place to stay at night sometimes seven or eight o'clock before we could get entertainment for ourselves and horses. In the timber, on South River, one of the carriage wheels suddenly dropped into a deep rut and the axletree broke. There was no house near, and Mr. Gaylord cut a hickory sapling, bent it around and secured it with a rope, so that we forded the river and came on to Indianola. * *

"In western Iowa were unbridged streams with high, steep, icy banks. These were frozen at the sides, but running in the channel. Twenty miles before reaching the Nodaway River, Mr. Gaylord was warned that it was useless to proceed, as there was no possibility of crossing it, but we kept on. We found a man and two boys living in a shanty near the river

*Life of Reuben Gaylord.

bank. Their services were secured, and a place was found up the stream where the family could walk over on the ice. Returning to the ford we sat down upon a log with our faces turned away, unwilling to look upon the dangerous exploit. Rails and branches of trees were laid down the side of the steep, icy descent to prevent the carriage from sliding around and being wrecked on a stage coach which had been fast in the middle of the stream for three days. Mr. Gaylord succeeded in driving across without accident, and we pressed on our way.

"We reached Council Bluffs on December 21st, riding against a piercing northwest wind the last half day. The hotel was full to overflowing, and Mr. Gaylord and Mr. Rice walked the streets until eleven o'clock to find a lodging place. But in those days private houses were small and crowded with their own occupants. We stayed at Mr. Rice's that night, and the next day found a vacant place in the hotel. Then Mr. Gaylord came over to see if the house promised us was ready. Winter had come on with so much severity that work was suspended, and it could not be occupied. A part of another dwelling was secured. On the afternoon of Christmas day Mr. Gaylord brought his family from the Bluffs to find shelter there. We crossed the Missouri on the ice at a point then quite north of town. The cold was so intense that we were nearly paralyzed on our arrival, and had to be helped into the house. Mr. Milton

Rogers had himself brought a stove from the Bluffs, and a fire was soon kindled."

Mr. Richardson of the legislative Council and a former governor of Michigan, was a warm friend and supporter in the establishment of the church under Mr. Gaylord. A brick church was built in 1857, and for years was one of the wonders of the city. It stood on Sixteenth street across the alley from the present site of the Y.M.C.A. Mr. Gaylord continued a laborer in Omaha and vicinity until his death in 1880.

The Roman Catholics built the first church edifice, in the city. It was of brick and stood on Ninth street near the site of their present cathedral.

The records of the Episcopal Church, like those of the Congregationalists, having been well preserved both by letters and in the minds of men, we learn that Rev. Henry Gregory, a missionary among the Indians at Green Bay, Wisconsin, spent some time in the Missouri Valley. "His errand was to learn something of the Indian tribes in this region with a view to a mission among them." He was with Colonel Leavenworth at the evacuation of Fort Calhoun in the latter twenties, and spoken of as chaplain of the troops during the winter's existence of Fort Crogan near the site of Omaha.

Rev. Edward W. Peet, of Des Moines, was sent by Bishop Lee of Iowa, on a missionary visit to Omaha. He held service in the state house on Ninth street April 20, 1856, and the next week organized the first

Episcopal Church which has ever since been known as Trinity Parish. Bishops Kemper and Lee, names long synonymous with missionary efforts, visited the city in July accompanied by Rev. W. N. Irish, and soon thereafter Rev. Geo. W. Watson was sent to take up the work.

Following the year 1856 church organization progressed rapidly, and soon the people began to look toward the establishment of public schools.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN STEAMBOATING DAYS.

THE early settlers of Omaha were agitated each year with the schemes of rival towns to secure the capitol. Governor Izard obtained their lasting gratitude by vetoing the first attempt, and the enemies of the metropolis failed to muster enough votes to overcome the veto. Finally, the Federal government set the matter at rest by erecting a capitol here, and the citizens were jubilant. The capitol crowned the bluff overlooking the city, on the present site of the high school. Omaha had now become famous abroad, the emigrant rarely failing to repeat the magic word in discussing the new West. Mr. James M. Woolworth, "attorney and counselor-at-law and general land agent," issued about this time a neat little volume entitled, "Nebraska in 1857," designed for circulation among home seekers. Some of its contents so well picture the Omaha of that day and the current of events, as to be of value to the student of history. Mr. Woolworth writes:

"Thousands will this season visit the West, not only to locate but 'look around.' Many of them are unacquainted with the different routes and are unac-

customed to traveling. For the benefit of such the following statement has been prepared. It commences at New York and extends to Omaha in Nebraska, but any person will be able to determine how best to reach any point on the line from his own home.

"Those whose time is more valuable and important than comfort and who can only make a flying visit can take the Hudson River R.R. to Albany; then the New York Central to Suspension Bridge; then the Great Western R.R. through Canada to Detroit; then the Chicago and Rock Island R.R. to Davenport; then the Mississippi and Missouri R.R. to Iowa City; then the stage to Omaha. The distances on this route are From New York to Chicago, 960 miles; from Chicago to Iowa City 236 miles; from Iowa City by stage, 275 miles; making 1,471 miles by the shortest route. Passengers arrive at Iowa City at noon of the third day, leaving for Omaha the same night, and arriving there in three days more, making the trip from New York through in six days and six nights. This is as quick as the trip can be made."

The author then describes the more comfortable route from Chicago to St. Louis by rail, thence to Omaha via the Missouri River steamer. "Steamboats are always in readiness at St. Louis for the Missouri River and travelers with their baggage can be transferred from the cars to the boats. The usual time from St. Louis to Omaha in a good stage of water is five days, thus making the time from New York to

Omaha, via St. Louis, about nine or ten days. * * Tickets are good for a year and will cost much less than to buy them at intervals. * * The steamboat route gives much more comfort than the all rail route and is more economical. The passenger gets two nights rest between New York and St. Louis and the passage up the Missouri is in boats as fine as any in the West; and while living is extra when traveling by railroad, it is included in the steamboat fare. It is likely that fares up the river will be lower than ever this coming season on account of competition."

Extracts from Rev. Gaylord's description of a trip down the river will add to the picture of pioneer travel on the old route still passing our doors. Expanding travel seems to have narrowed our views of scenes near home. How few descriptions of nearby towns breathe the freshness of this old letter:

"Steamer St. Mary; 7 p.m.— * * We were off in less than an hour after going on board. The sail down the river was delightful. We tarried a few moments at Council Bluffs landing, and then passed on to Plattsmouth. Here were a large number of teams waiting to cross the river. The view up the Weeping Water Valley from this point is very fine. Have paid my fare, \$42.50, first-class ticket to New York.

"Wednesday, 11 a.m.; Near Kansas Line.—Our boat stopped at Nebraska City. We left there at 9 p.m.; ran a while, and tied up till morning; passed

Brownville about half-past eight this morning. Mr. G. stopped at Brownville. He is an interesting man, a lawyer from Michigan, but he thinks the profession is full in Omaha. We are having a pleasant sail, and will be in St. Joseph this evening. The river is very high, and gives us a fine view of the country and bluffs, which are indeed lovely. 4 o'clock.—We are now within one hour's run of St. Joseph. The river scenery is not as interesting below the Kansas line as above it. * * We reached St. Joseph at 5 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon and took lodgings. There is a vast amount of building there, and everything is active. But the streets, how narrow! Only forty to sixty feet wide. I walked up onto the bluffs where I could overlook the city and the surrounding country. The view is extensive and fine, but not equal to that from Capitol hill, Omaha. St. Joseph promises to become a place of great importance, but evidently was not laid out with this expectation."

Professor Beals describes his first view of Omaha, April 5, 1861, interestingly: "At daybreak, the steamer West Wind, that brought me hither, swung from her moorings at the lower Council Bluffs landing and made her way up the river. As we steamed from behind the wood covered hills below the city, among the first objects that met my eye was the territorial capitol, which, with its Corinthian pilasters and frieze, and its towering dome, rested on the brow of the hill above the city, like a crown, and gave promise of good gov-

ernment—the reign of law and order. Our boat made the shore and tied up at the foot of Jones street. The natural bank of the river was the only wharf, and the loose sands of the bottoms the only pier. To reach town the omnibus drove through those sands to the foot of Farnam, the principal street."

Since the building of railroads, steamboat travel on the Missouri has passed away so effectually by reason of the river's swift and changing current, that only a lone government steamer passing at rare intervals reminds the younger generation of the old days. From the turbulent life of the times many a story was spun by "Oliver Optic" and others that still lingers in the minds of men now gray. A few years ago the following memoranda was found in an old book at the county court house. The number of boats arriving and departing will prove a surprise to the young of to-day:

"March 4, 1859—Good stage of water in the river and free from ice. Steamer Florida in view at the lower landing.

"March 5—The Florida came up, and, as she passed the foot of Farnam street, she was greeted with the firing of cannon and the hearty cheers of the people. She had very little freight.

"March 6—The Florida left this morning.

"March 10, 1859—The Omaha arrived about noon with a heavy freight; few passengers. She left the same day.

“March 21—Steamboat Emigrant arrived at 7 and left at 10 a.m.

“March 22—Steamboat Sioux City arrived at 7 p.m.

“March 26—Steamboats Hesperian and E. M. Reidland.

“March 29—Steamboats Asa Wilges and Spread Eagle.

“April 1—Steamer White Cloud; left April 2.

“April 4—Steamer Hannibal.

“April 5—Steamer Emigrant.

“April 9—Steamer Iryitan.

“April 10—Steamer Omaha.”

The ancient mariners of the Missouri lead a hard life, and though it was the most luxurious mode of travel wrecks and loss of life occurred quite frequently. In those days, when factories and smoking chimneys were few, before age had wrinkled her brow, though she is now declared most fair, Omaha was noted for the beauty of her surroundings. We quote Judge Woolworth's book of 1857 still further to show the appreciation of the citizens for their city and the anticipations of a trans-continental railroad, during the days of river travel:

“Omaha City is beautifully situated in a wide plateau, the second bottom of the Missouri River. Back of it rise the bluffs by gentle slopes from the summits of which the great prairies of the interior roll in beautiful undulations.

“From the first of these may be seen the grandest

view the eye of man has ever looked upon. Up and down the river on the Nebraska side runs, as far as the eye can reach, the table lands so smooth, so unbroken, so perfect, the hand of art could not add to or take from one part of it. Beyond is the river, bordered by heavy trees, with its broad shallows and turbid current floating with serpentine windings. On the opposite side is the broad bottom of the river, and cutting short the view, rise the bold rugged bluffs of Iowa, the tracing of their forests standing out in the clear atmosphere with the strongest distinctness, while Council Bluffs lies ensconced within an opening, a busy mart of all that region.

"Omaha City is well built up with substantial brick blocks. It numbers 1,800 people. Its advantages are first, it is the capital of the territory. The United States have commenced building a capitol which is situated on a handsome and commanding hill in the west part of town. The building is a parallelogram in form, with heavy columns upon the side. The ornaments, which are elaborate, are of iron, as are also the casings of the pillars and the caps of the windows. Fifty thousand dollars have been expended in laying the foundations and carrying it up one story. A like sum has been appropriated by Congress to complete it. When finished it will be a most elegant building.

"The second advantage which Omaha City enjoys is the fact that she lies directly opposite Council Bluffs,

and is, at the present at least, the head of navigation of the Missouri River.

"The first circumstance gives her the advantage of receiving the emigrant into the territory. He sees her promise and feels her enterprise, and makes her his home; or if he seek some other point ever acknowledges that she is the great town of Nebraska.

"The second fills her landings with the immense imports from the East which supply the territory. She is indeed the main point of entry for the emigrant and for merchandise. The coming season, at least one boat a day will unload at her landing.

"A further advantage of Omaha City is the fact that she is the eastern terminus of the great route to the West.

"A year ago Congress established a military road from this place to Fort Kearney, and appropriated \$50,000 for its construction. That road is nearly complete and runs up the valley of the Platte, through all the principal settlements west of this.

"Congress has made the further appropriation of \$400,000 to construct a wagon road to the South Pass, the eastern terminus of which is here.

"These facts give Omaha City a great impetus in her growth into a commercial town. Far and wide over the country her name is known as well as the territory itself. To it is the great rush of emigration at the present time. It has the start of all rivals, which no ordinary advantage can overcome.

"The population of this place is made up of intelligent and enterprising men. They are generally from the cultivated and educated classes of the East. In the character of its society as regards intelligence and culture, genteel and even fashionable life, Omaha rivals the best towns of twice her population which can be named in New York or New England.

"As an evidence of this we refer to a course of ten lectures delivered under the auspices of its Library Association, by the citizens of the place, which, both in the character of the lectures delivered and of the audiences assembled to listen to them, would do the highest credit in an Eastern city.

"Handsome churches have been built by the Methodists and Congregationalists, in both of which are settled clergymen. The Baptists also have a clergyman here. An Episcopal church has been organized and service is regularly held on Sunday by a clergyman. A handsome church is to be erected by the Episcopilians the coming summer, at an expense of \$7,000. The Roman Catholics also have a church here.

"The Territorial Library, containing a full set of the American Reports and a good selection from the English, together with a large number of elementary law books and a handsome case of miscellaneous works, in all numbering 4,000 volumes, is located here. The library is provided for in the Organic Act. * *

"It must be ten years before the great Pacific Road

can be carried through. * * The fact that Council Bluffs is the terminus of this road, and that Omaha is directly opposite, will build up a town of large influence here very rapidly. We are therefore of the opinion, that the great point for ten years to come is to be about the point where this road crosses the river. By that time it may change—may go to Florence—to save the deflection of many miles; first to the south to reach Council Bluffs and then north, to keep the north bank of the Platte. This is the work and problem of future years.

“It is further to be noted that along the Mississippi the large towns are all on the west side of the river. The law of that region can hardly help but rule here.”

Omaha citizens were burdened with the knowledge that Florence and Crescent City, opposite Florence, had an island of rock between them and that the hills of Omaha might only become famous as affording a fine view of the trains crossing the “Florence-Crescent City bridge.” But engineering skill developed sufficiently in the next ten years to place the bridge where Omaha’s oldest inhabitants wanted it—the western terminal within easy distance of their own dooryards.

CHAPTER XV.

NAMING THE STREETS.

THE names of the streets of the older part of Omaha are for the most part historical. The names were mainly selected by Dr. Enos Lowe, president of the ferry company, and were given in honor of the administration and patrons of the territory, and thus record a most interesting period of our national life. The first plat of the city was from Pierce street northward, and the first name was given in honor of President Franklin Pierce, who signed the bill organizing Nebraska Territory.

From the first the founders looked upon Omaha as destined to become the gateway between the large cities of the East and the Pacific Ocean. To this is attributed the naming of Pacific street.

Mason street, next north of Pacific was named for Judge Charles Mason, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Iowa, and a resident of Burlington.

Marcy street bears the name of Wm. L. Marcy, Secretary of State during President Pierce's administration.

Leavenworth street is named in honor of General Henry Leavenworth who commanded troops on the Missouri River at several points, encamping one winter in the vicinity of Omaha. The city of Leavenworth also gets its name from this pioneer soldier.

Jones street is said to be named in honor of Senator George W. Jones, of Dubuque, one of Iowa's first two senators who, with his colleague Senator Dodge, was an enthusiastic patron of Nebraska Territory.

Jackson street was named for President Andrew Jackson. It would never have done to select so many Democratic names without including "Old Hickory."

Howard street takes its name from General Tilman A. Howard of Rockville, Ind., a prominent lawyer, special envoy from the United States to the "Lone Star Republic." It was mainly the good offices of General Howard that brought the great state of Texas into the Union.

Harney street honors General Wm. S. Harney, in command of Western troops during the early days and prominent in councils with the Indians.

Farnam street is named in honor of Mr. Henry Farnam, of Hartford, Conn., who built the first railroad to the Mississippi River. He was active in constructing the Rock Island Railroad to Iowa City and westward. By an error this main business street was spelled "Farnham" on the first maps of the city.

Douglas street bears the name of Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, an active champion in the organization of Kansas and Nebraska Territories.

Dodge street was named for Senator A. C. Dodge of Burlington, Iowa, afterwards U. S. Minister to Spain. This street is now the dividing line in numbering the streets north and south, though it would seem more

in keeping with the fitness of things to have selected Capitol avenue for the division street, notwithstanding the old postoffice is located on Dodge street.

As may be supposed Capitol avenue takes its name from the territorial capitol which stood on capitol hill facing down the avenue just as does the high school of the present day. Nebraska avenue was the name given to the street running north and south to the center of the Capitol grounds. However a contentious settler spoiled the plan as to south end of proposed avenue. The north end is now Twenty-first street. It was the plan of the founders, Dr. Lowe and his co-workers, to have a city of broad, symmetrical and beautiful streets leading up to Capitol square.

Davenport street is said to have been named by citizens from Davenport Iowa.

Chicago street of course takes its name from the city of Chicago. "Chicago, Davenport and Omaha" were on the direct line of travel to the gold fields.

Cass street was named after Lewis Cass, Secretary of State under President Buchanan.

Along California street the wagon trains, bound for the gold fields first wended their way west after crossing the Missouri River on the "Lone Tree" ferry. The name California street naturally followed.

Daniel Webster, the "expounder of the constitution," is honored by the next street, leading to and from the Webster-street depot.

Nebraska's territorial governors are honored in the order of their incumbency. Burt, Cuming and Izard are all prominent streets. It is fitting that Cuming street should have become a lively business thoroughfare, thus truly typifying the young governor. There are many old citizens of Omaha who have a kindly word for the memory of Thomas B. Cuming. He is declared to have been a young man of surpassing executive ability, and his early death March 23d, 1858, in the thirtieth year of his age, caused universal regret.

Messrs. Poppleton and Woolworth were honored with streets named after them in the newer portions of the south side. Twenty-fourth street was not so many years ago called Saunders street after Governor Saunders, and Fortieth street Lowe avenue, honoring the Lowe brothers, but the modern tendency has been to call the streets running west from the river in numerical order. Park avenue however seems to retain its original name, despite the fact that the City Council officially changed it to Twenty-ninth avenue, its pretty title having a hold on the popular mind, as well of the residents along the avenue.

Slierman avenue was named in honor of the hero of the march "from Atlanta to the sea," General Sherman becoming quite popular in Omaha during the building of the Union Pacific railroad. St. Mary's avenue took its name from St. Mary's convent which formerly stood on the avenue corner Twenty-second street. Before the grading of Leavenworth street

horse cars "ran down" St. Mary's avenue hill. On going up the hill in a six o'clock car it was often the duty of the male passengers to get out and walk from Twentieth to Twenty-third streets. In speaking of the streets, it will be interesting to new-comers to know that there was great opposition to the grading of Leavenworth street from Sixteenth street west only a dozen years ago. Ex-Congressman Connell who pushed the scheme was roundly denounced. Soon after he was hailed as the man who had made the property holders along Leavenworth street rich in spite of themselves, and sent to Congress for his enterprise.

Unlike cities where the streets run alphabetically the naming of the streets of Omaha has proven of much educational value to the young in arousing an interest in the history of their home city.

CHAPTER XVI.

EARLY SCHOOLS.

THE old saying that the term New Englander is synonymous of education was borne out in the early days of this city. Mr. Gaylord had no sooner gotten his church under roof than a part of it was devoted to teaching the young, a Mrs. Smith taking charge of the school. And this was a time when he wrote: "The town has been thronged with the native Indians, the former lords of this soil. There were at one time for nearly two weeks, 800 or 900 of the Omaha Indians encamped about two miles from this place. One day they were all in town at once, and received from the government agent 600 sacks of flour and several hogsheads of sugar."

Miss Adelaide Goodwill (nee Mrs. Allen Root) is credited with opening Omaha's first public school. The term began July 1, 1855, in a room of the old state house on Ninth street, with about forty pupils. The school was compelled to vacate the capitol about the middle of December, to prepare the rooms for the assembling of the legislature.

"Simpson University" was the burden of much talk soon after, and steps taken to incorporate the

college. February 10, 1857, the legislature memorialized Congress to appropriate for Simpson University "not less than ten thousand acres" of land, but Congress never took action on the matter. The legislature of 1857 also incorporated a school at Saratoga, a suburb of Omaha, and a rival for the territorial capitol. By the irony of time and events an Omaha public school (the Saratoga school) has been built in that vicinity.

Mr. John H. Kellom published a card in the Omaha Times, October 23, 1857, recommending J. S. Burt as "a teacher of a select school" and trusted that "the citizens of Omaha who had children to educate would give him liberal encouragement to open a good school in the city."

By the coming of Mr. Howard Kennedy, a young teacher from New York state, the schools of Omaha were fairly inaugurated November 10, 1859. The principal school was located in the old state house, another school being opened on the west side of Thirteenth opposite the present site of the Millard Hotel, and a third school on Cuming street. Messrs. A. D. Jones, J. H. Kellom and Dr. J. G. Monell were the members of the first board of education. The one principal and three assistants taught from sixty to eighty pupils each. It was found necessary to charge parents a small sum for each pupil: "Small scholars, \$1 per quarter; common branches including philosophy, bookkeeping and elementary algebra, \$2 per quarter;

scholars in Latin, Greek, French, German, surveying, chemistry and belles-lettres, \$3 per quarter." In April, 1860, a school exhibition was given at the Methodist Church on Thirteenth street, and proved a great event for the little city. The panic of 1857 and the years following bore heavily upon the citizens, so heavily indeed that during the early "sixties" it was difficult to support any sort of school. It was in April, 1861, that Prof. S. D. Beals landed in Omaha from a river steamer, and has from that time to this been identified with educational work in Omaha and the state at large. In speaking of his arrival Professor Beals says: "As we passed along we noticed here and there a vacant building, which with the small number of people in sight, told plainly that business and thrift were not then at their height in Omaha. The town was reduced at that time by the financial revulsion of 1857 and by an uncertain political future, to about 2,500 inhabitants. At the East I had been engaged only in public schools, and desired to continue teaching at the West, but employment in the public schools of Omaha at that time was not possible. The directors had used all the money in their hands to sustain them during the year just closed. They not only had no means but did not expect to have enough to open them again within one or two years. Being compelled therefore to give up my hope to make an engagement with the directors, I turned at once to organize a private school." On the organization of the state Governor

Butler appointed Professor Beals the first Superintendent of Public Instruction. This office was afterwards made elective.

At this time Omaha was shorn of her early glory, the capitol. In 1867 Nebraska was admitted as a state and the capitol removed to Lancaster, "a town of half a dozen houses in Lancaster County." The new capital was named Lincoln. Inasmuch as the city of Omaha had given the territory its first capitol grounds and had appropriated \$60,000 for the completion of the building when the government appropriation had fallen short, the grounds and building now reverted to Omaha for educational purposes, by action of the state legislature, being deeded to the city in April, 1869. The intention was to use the capitol for a high school, but it was found insecure. Bonds to the amount of \$100,000 were voted for a new high school building. The school was completed in 1872 at a cost of \$225,000. It still remains the most conspicuous building in Omaha. During the erection of this school store-rooms in various parts of the city were utilized for high school purposes. The progress of Omaha (in the early years of the Union Pacific Railroad) was now such as to inaugurate the metropolitan school system. A board of education of twelve members was elected. With universal approbation the board choose J. H. Kellom principal of the new high school. Mr. Kellom had been identified with school committees since his coming to Omaha at

an early day. The prime of his life was devoted to the young people of Omaha. He was so thoroughly identified with the founding of the Omaha schools and so enshrined in the hearts of so many young people that his death at Tustin, California, March 17, 1891, called forth a beautiful tribute from Henry D. Estabrook, published in the *World-Herald*. Mr. Estabrook, who calls himself a "charter member" of the Omaha high school, wrote as follows:

"When the capitol was removed from Omaha it was replaced by a high school—a profitable exchange. And there the noble structure has remained, and will remain, the sign-manual of Omaha's true greatness. It was important that no mistakes should be made in the beginning of the enterprise. The original impulse must be strong and in the right direction. John H. Kellom consented to act as principal. * * Mr. Kellom was a man of means and of wide influence. He had held offices of public trust; he had refused a nomination for Congress. The emoluments of a teacher's position offered no temptation. He accepted the place through a sense of duty and in response to the universal demand.

"Mr. Kellom was a born teacher. In the first place he was a Christian gentleman, a happy optimist, an all charitable, all-loving Christian, whose rules of governing were in the beatitudes, whose approving smile was a benediction. In the next place he was a profound scholar. The older I grow and the more I

try to learn, the more I appreciate his wisdom and erudition.

"Up to that time our public schools had been govered on the theory that to spare the rod was to spoil the child. I know this to be a fact, for I matriculated in nearly every school in Omaha, and had been kept from spoiling by being most effectually tanned. Mr. Kellom inspired his scholars to govern themselves through the approval of their own conscience. This was a new invention. It was a wonderful discovery. At the risk of appearing indelicate I will illustrate my meaning by a personal reminiscence. I had committed some trespass which I knew merited a castigation, the which I fully expected to have administered when Professor Kellom requested me to step with him into an adjoining room. I received the pantomime commiseration of my mates and hurled back a wink intended as defiance. But the bastinado was never mentioned. In the space of ten minutes I learned more about American institutions and a democratic form of government than I had ever known before. What my teacher endeavored to impress upon me was the fact that I was a part of these institutions and of this government, and responsible primarily to myself for my own conduct, that the public school was, perhaps, the most important feature of all our institutions, conferring benefits gratuitously, which were inestimable to every person willing to do his part in the world; that fun was fun, and he delighted in it as

much as any one; but lawlessness was treason, and hurt no one half so much as the one guilty of it; that he felt sure that all I needed was to be reminded of these things, and my own conscience would tell me what was right and manly—that was all. * *

“Mr. Kellom was a man who loved to see things grow, and to assist in the process. When his age and infirmities admonished him that to teach the young idea how to shoot had become too arduous and confining, he took to growing oranges in the mellifluous climate of California. Only a year ago my wife visited him and Mrs. Kellom at their home in Tustin. It was her first visit to the golden state, and as the train came down out of the mountains, where snow and clouds seemed piled upon each other—it was all so cold and white—into the gorgeous valley of the Sacramento with its riotous roses and carnival of vegetation, the change was like the thrilling transition of a dream. One day was devoted to a pilgrimage to Tustin. It was a joyous, tearful meeting between the old professor and his former pupil. Towards evening Mr. Kellom insisted upon showing her the beauties of his orange groves. Leaning upon his arm together they wandered through long vistas of trees laden with yellow fruit, each tree trained in the way it should go (of course!) perfect in its symmetry, like a huge bouquet, erect, luxuriant, with an individuality of its own. The groves were filled with Mexicans picking and packing oranges, and their swart faces and fantastic costumes

added piquancy to the scene. As they looked the sun went down in a perfect explosion of colors, the clouds fairly dripping their crimson light, the very air incandined. She left him and his wife standing in this mellow glow, their venerable heads crowned with a radiance not of earth, their faces bathed with the golden mist—left them among their books and flowers, in an Arcadia of their own. And now God has taken him out of Eden to usher him into Paradise. Well, it was an ideal life without fret or friction, and yet too useful to be selfish. Our old professor teaches us something even in his death."

When the old Izard-street school was demolished and a new school for its district built at Twenty-third and Paul streets the name "Kellom" school was unanimously adopted by the board on motion of F. R. McConnell, one of the members of the board and at one time a pupil of Professor Kellom. As an acknowledgement Mrs. Kellom presented the school its first flag, which was raised on the day of the formal opening.

The High school has long been the pride of Omaha, one of the chief sources of inspiration lifting her above demoralizing influences. The many new primary schools are a source of wonder, to the citizens no less than to visitors. These are of the low-built, (two-story) massive modern type. There are now thirty-eight school buildings in Omaha. Exposition year opened with more than 16,000 pupils enrolled, in charge of 364 teachers.

CHAPTER XVII.

ESTABLISHING TELEGRAPH LINES.

OMAHA has had much to do in the permanent establishment of the telegraph in the United States. It was largely the building of the telegraph line from this city to the Pacific coast that made Omaha the center of events in the growing West and to forge ahead of the many competing towns everywhere springing up and striving to become the "metropolis of the plains." Mr. Edward Creighton built the first telegraph line from St. Louis to Omaha, the Missouri and Western, in 1859. Mr. Creighton then made Omaha his home and took up the idea of building a line to the Pacific coast, and went East to consult capitalists. Jeptha H. Wade, a heavy stockholder in Eastern lines, Hiram Sibley and Ezra Cornell came to the aid of the Omaha man. Before the close of 1860 the Missouri and Western line was extended to Julesburg, Colorado. In the winter of 1860-61 Mr. Creighton made a trip across the mountains to Utah, through a country swarming with Indians hostile to the encroachments of the white men. His face was frost-bitten and the party suffered greatly from the cold. He succeeded in interesting Brigham

Young of the Mormon Church in the enterprise. Salt Lake City was made the objective point of the builders from the east. Another corps began building from the Pacific coast. Now began a spirited race between Mr. Creighton superintending the eastern end and Mr. Street superintending the Pacific end, Creighton's men beating the coast linemen by about one week. A number of other lines followed and Omaha soon became the telegraph center of the West, and so continues. There are now more than 300 telegraph wires into Omaha, exclusive of telephone systems.

The lots about the old state house on Ninth street were used for storing the wires for the transcontinental telegraph. The young people of Professor Beals' private school then held in the old building were interested witnesses of the transfer of telegraph material from steamboats to wagon trains bound for the Rocky Mountains and Utah.

Omaha's pioneer telegraph builder contemplated connecting America by telegraph with Europe by way of the Behring strait. The successful laying of the Atlantic cable by Cyrus Field and his company however set aside these plans. Mr. Creighton died in 1874. In 1876 Mrs. Creighton died leaving \$200,000 for the erection of Creighton College as a memorial to her husband.

CHAPTER XVIII.

INDIAN SCARES AND THE REBELLION.

SEVERAL Indian scares occurred during the early settlement of Omaha and vicinity, though none of them resulted in an open outbreak. Fortunately the Omaha tribe was peaceably inclined from the first owing to the counsels of Chiefs Blackbird and Logan Fontenelle. The Pawnees and Sioux retained a smouldering hatred of the ever increasing whites, and their thieving sometimes growing unbearable to the farmer-settlers, resentment resulted in bloodshed. December, 1854, acting-governor Cumming recommended the organization of two regiments of volunteers. John M. Thayer was commissioned brigadier-general; Among the names of subordinate officers are found A. J. Hanscom, colonel first regiment; George L. Miller, assistant surgeon. Pawnee depredations in Dodge County in the spring of 1855 caused Governor Izard to send General Thayer and O. D. Richardson to hold a council with the marauders. The Indians were not peaceably disposed, and the only result was to strengthen the militia. In July of this year a band of Sioux appeared at Fontenelle, a settlement in Washington County. The volunteers were ordered

from the capital, but the Sioux withdrew before the Omaha soldiers took the field.

The "Pawnee War" of 1859 created considerable excitement in the territory. July 1st, messengers appeared in Omaha from Fontenelle, with the news that the Pawnees were pillaging and burning houses and driving off stock along the Elkhorn Valley. Numbers of settlers, fearing a general uprising, fled to Omaha for safety. Governor Black sent General Thayer to investigate, and a company of United States dragoons were ordered from Nebraska City. The people of West Point and vicinity came down to Fontenelle in a body and reported that the Indians had burned the dwellings of the German settlers, "ripped up their feather beds, scattered the contents, and used the ticks for blankets; tore to pieces clocks for the purpose of getting the brass rings to hang in their ears, and drove off all kinds of stock."

Mr. John T. Bell, the historian of the Pawnee war, then a mere boy, tells the story: "Thirty men armed with rifles, shot guns, muskets and revolvers, started for West Point in wagons. A portion of the party went to DeWitt, some six miles up the Elkhorn. As this detachment was on the point of returning to West Point to rejoin the others, having met no red skins, a scout came in with the information that he had seen a small body of Indians crossing the river a mile distant. Arrangements were instantly made to capture the party. A portion of the white men took

position in one room of Mr. Moore's double log house, while the rest kept themselves out of sight. The people of the house were instructed to admit the Indians into the unoccupied room of the house, and after they were all in the room, the outside door was to be securely fastened, the middle door between the rooms was to be opened; the white men were to rush from the room in which they were concealed into that occupied by the Indians, and then their capture would be a very easy matter—as they thought. It was a very neat plan, but it didn't result as well as it was expected. The Indians, eleven in number, approached the house; they were invited to walk in, which invitation was accepted, as it was evidently their intention to go in whether they were invited or not; the outside door was closed and fastened; the signal was given; the white men rushed with a yell into the room. The slippery Indians shed their blankets, dived down among the legs of the white men, slipped about like so many eels, burst open the door and were out of the room like a flash, and all the white men had to show for their stratagem was the lodgment of a slug in the wrist of one of their own number. The whites blazed away as the Indians ran toward the river. Two or three of the Indians were killed, one wounded, and one captured. The wounded Indian soon appeared to be dead. The corpse was placed in the river. As soon as the supposed-to-be-dead Indian struck the water he dived down and swam under the water for the opposite

bank. As he came up to get a whiff of air the plucky fellow received a load of buckshot from a white man who never could appreciate a practical joke. The Indian never reached the other side of the river alive.

"It did not take many days for the news of the killing of the Indians to spread, and soon the entire territory was in a blaze of excitement. A massacre was feared. It was reported for a week that ten thousand Indians in paint and feathers were approaching town. At night each bush or shrub would be transformed into a stealthily approaching redskin. The volunteers were called for and a small army was soon on its way up the Elkhorn to join General Thayer. Two hundred men gathered in and about Fontenelle. It was resolved to follow the Indian trail and administer a lesson. On overtaking the Pawnees their camp vanished like magic, and in an incredibly short time the wide river bottom was swarming with redskins, all striving, shouting and yelling to make their escape. A fat old chief was overtaken, who threw up his hands and surrendered. He immediately set up a series of terrific yells, which were answered by an interchange of yells, and explained that a council with the 'Chemo-kee man' must be held. The chiefs were told they must either give up the braves who had been robbing and burning about West Point (for it was found only a small party had a hand in the depredations); pay the expenses of the expedition out of moneys due them from the government—or fight us. One chief

wanted to fight." They were two thousand to a few hundred. But the counsels of the older men, who had been to Washington, prevailed. They knew the resources of the whites, and also held in esteem the purchasing power of the United States money which they now and then received. The young men were given up. The squaw of one young fellow tore her hair and insisted on accompanying her lord. She soon after handed him a knife with which he feigned suicide. As the guards bent over him, the treacherous squaw secured the knife and cut the ropes which bound the prisoners together. The braves stampeded into a village of the Omaha tribe, all but one of the guards hot at their heels. Several of the Pawnees were killed and the rest escaped, all save the pretended self-murderer whose mouth was found filled with red paint, which had oozed from his lips like a hemorrhage. An Omaha Indian and pony were killed in the melee. Another council was necessary to pacify the Omahas who approached in war paint. "But they didn't fight us. Our cheek and our extraordinary conversational powers saved us for a second time. We reasoned with those chiefs; we talked as we had never talked before. We portrayed in brilliant and glowing colors the evils which would result in case the Omahas and Poncas joined with the Pawnees in declaring war against us. We deprecated the accidental shooting of the Omaha, promising to hang the man who fired the fatal shot. We made mention of the fact that the Omahas had

been at peace with us ever since the first settlement of the territory. We had regular details made to talk to those old chaps who had one side of their villainous looking countenances painted red and the other black, and as soon as one detail of men would be exhausted, another took their place, and we outwinded them. Their desire for war gradually cooled, and they finally agreed that if we would leave medicines for the wounded Indians, and pay for the pony we had killed, they would let us alone. To this condition we assented cheerfully, and as the Poncas had signified their intention to do as the Omahas decided to act in the matter, the Pawnees again concluded they would not fight us alone. We came to the Mormon settlement of Genoa, and were received as a band of brave and noble men. Leaving this camp in a manner becoming heroes we journeyed down the Loup fork to Columbus, where we were royally entertained by the German settlers. Here the 'army' disbanded. We felt that the Indians were now safe from any murderous design which we may have harbored against them, and we rejoiced to know it. It was supposed the government would enforce the contract we had made with the Indians, keep back enough funds to pay the expenses of the expedition, and that we would receive the money which was due us. But the government recoiled on us, paid the Indians all that was coming to them, and we were left to whistle for our pay. Thus ended the Pawnee war."

Nebraska and Omaha were well represented in the war for the Union, notwithstanding the poverty of the territory. The companies were usually mustered into service at the capital. John M. Thayer of Omaha organized the First regiment Nebraska Volunteers, and was commissioned as colonel. He afterwards became a major-general. R. W. Furnas, Nebraska's staid agriculturist, was colonel of the Second Nebraska. Both these colonels afterwards became governors of Nebraska. "Curtis' Horse," named in honor of General Samuel R. Curtis of Keokuk, Iowa, was largely recruited in Omaha. Its four companies were in charge of Colonel W. W. Lowe, (afterwards a general) and consolidated with the Fifth Iowa Cavalry. Dr. Enos Lowe, father of General Lowe, was mustered in as surgeon of the battalion. Benton Barracks, St. Louis, was their rendezvous, and the Fifth Iowa played an important part in preventing Missouri from going out of the Union.

Militia organized throughout Nebraska as a precaution against Indian outbreaks. In 1864 a wagon train was destroyed at Plum Creek, and thirteen men killed. It is claimed the attacking Indians were commanded by white men disguised as savages. Quantrill's band had just before raided Lawrence, Kansas. Omaha was in August filled with alarmed settlers. Business was suspended and volunteers awaited an attack on citizens and banks. Some of Quantrill's guerrillas were recognized, it is told, and concluding Omaha was to warn for them, the attack was never made.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FIRST TRANS-CONTINENTAL RAILROAD.

OMAHA has always been a fortunate city commercially. No sooner did she lose the capitol on the organization of the state in 1867, than the completion of the Union Pacific Railroad a few years later made her a center of Western affairs. However, the building of a trans-continental railroad was conceived in the minds of men of action before the first house was built in Omaha. The survey up the Platte Valley and across the mountains to California made by General John C. Fremont in the "forties" called attention to the possibilities of a railroad along the route of the "Pathfinder," as Fremont was called. Fremont also surveyed a southern route and it is said he himself looked upon it with favor. His father-in-law, Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, took up the subject in Congress, advocating government aid of a road to the Pacific Coast. At the close of the rebellion Fremont was interested in surveying for a Southern trans-continental road. The opening of the war, however had resulted in throwing the activities of Northern capitalists toward building a Northern road.

In the first few years of Omaha's existence the thoughtful men of the city were occupied in schemes

for building the great American air line through their borders. At every session of the early legislature some act in behalf of a Nebraska line was endorsed. It will be interesting for the young people of Omaha to know that the first railroad company organized to build up the Platte to California had its beginning in their city. The first Nebraska legislature passed an act, approved March 1st, 1855, incorporating the Platte Valley and Pacific Railroad Company. The company was given "the exclusive privilege of building a railroad up the north side of the Platte River." A survey was made from the foot of Howard street through the north-western part of the city up the military road. Congress failed to come to the aid of the company, and without national aid they could not go on. The efforts of Dr. Enos Lowe and his co-workers in this enterprise nevertheless led on to successful results for their successors. General Lowe is now custodian of the books of this first Nebraska railroad company, at this day only of value as mementoes of the enterprise of the founders of the city.

In 1853-54 no less than nine routes were surveyed across the continent. A party of Congressmen visited Omaha in 1857, and on reporting to Congress recommended the Platte Valley route, and government aid, General Curtis, of Iowa, one of visitors, introducing the bill. Pacific railroad bills were introduced and defeated at each succeeding session of Congress until July, 1862, when the war of the rebellion hastened

matters. The successful bill provided for the organization of "The Union Pacific Railroad Company." Many of the surveys for a Pacific railroad had been conducted under Jefferson Davis, when Secretary of War, but on the granting of the charter, the south being in rebellion, the important document contained the names of Northern men only. The Nebraskans named therein were Gilbert C. Monell, Augustus Kountze, T. M. Marquette, W. H. Taylor and Alvin Saunders. The bill provided for the building of a continuous railroad line from a point on the 100th meridian between the Republican River and the north margin of the Platte Valley, in Nebraska, to the western boundary of Nevada; the donation to the company of alternate sections of land, except mineral lands, to a breadth of twenty miles on each side of the road, along its entire length; the conveyance of lands upon the completion of every forty consecutive miles; the time of completion of the main line to be no later than 1876. The land grants in round numbers amounted to 12,000,000 acres or 19,000 square miles. For every mile built the Union Pacific Railroad Company received a government loan of \$16,000 for thirty years and 12,000 acres of land.

A meeting for organization was held in Chicago on the first Tuesday of September, 1862, General Curtis of Iowa presiding. Formal organization took place in New York City, October 20, 1863, Governor John A. Dix of New York being elected president of

the board of directors and Thomas C. Durant vice president.

At this time, the Chicago, Iowa and Nebraska railroad (now the Chicago and Northwestern) had reached Marshalltown, Iowa; the Mississippi and Missouri (the Chicago and Rock Island) was in operation to Grinnell; the Burlington and Missouri River (Chicago, Burlington and Quincy) was built half way across the state of Iowa. These three railroads were heading toward Council Bluffs and Omaha. President Lincoln decided that the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific railroad should be on the western boundary of state of Iowa, opposite Omaha.

The telegram announcing Lincoln's decision was received in Omaha by Peter A. Dey, the chief engineer, on the morning of December 2, 1863. The weather was pleasant, and the citizens immediately decided to celebrate the event by "breaking ground" for the "grandest enterprise the world has ever witnessed," as George Francis Train expressed it that afternoon. At 2 o'clock a stage coach of the Western Stage Company conveyed Governor Saunders and other notables to near the foot of California street. It was here the first earth was thrown, near the site of the old ferry landing, and about where the Union Pacific shops of the present are located. Rev. T. B. Lemon opened the exercises with prayer. Governor Saunders removed the first spadeful of earth, followed by Mayor B. E. B. Kennedy of Omaha and Mayor Palmer of

Council Bluffs and others. Salutes were fired, the cannon at the Nebraska celebration being answered by another planted on the Iowa shore. Governor Saunders read a message from Colonel John Hay, private secretary to President Lincoln. A. J. Poppleton made the principal speech, and was followed by George Francis Train. Mr. Durant, vice president of the company, was so impressed with Mr. Poppleton's remarks that he had the Omaha man appointed attorney of the "greatest railroad corporation in the world."

The late Thomas C. Durant is credited with being the master executive in constructing the Union Pacific. No sooner had the this road commenced to build than the Kansas Pacific Railroad Company entered into competition for the prize offered by Congress stipulated in the charters of both companies—the first Pacific road to reach the 100th meridian should have the right of way as a main line to a connection with the Central Pacific. The Central Pacific was chartered by the California legislature to build eastward to the Nevada line; but by accepting the conditions imposed by Congress upon the Pacific roads, it became possessed of all the rights and subsidies of those roads.

And now began a race for the 100th meridian. Omaha people had only recently begun to sleep o' nights after defeating an effort of Bellevue to secure the Union Pacific terminal; now came the Kansas Pacific nightmare. Verily, eternal vigilance is the price of success. The Kansas road had the advantage of rail-

connections east. Omaha was more than a hundred miles from Iowa railroads. General Manager Durant was the man for the occasion. He organized an army of contractors. Vast quantities of supplies were piled about Omaha. The heavy grades immediately south and west of the city caused much delay, and the Kansas Pacific was in the lead. But when the open plains were reached Durant shot ahead of his competitor and was first at the goal (the 100th meridian) near the center of Nebraska. Thus the first continuous railroad to the Pacific Ocean was secured to Omaha. In this construction race as many as five miles of rails in a single day were laid by the successful road. It was another illustration of the fact that the main energy among men of the present age exists in the center of the temperate zone.

The construction of the Union Pacific was a strange and significant scene. Workmen from all parts of the world labored side by side, uniting the ends of the earth not only with iron bands, but fraternally. Negroes, Chinamen and Indians were there, the red man looking on while each drive of the hammer was sounding the death knell of his race. Chinamen on the Pacific division were grading the way to the overthrow of the Chinese wall—materially and figuratively.

The Central Pacific was to connect with the Union Pacific at Ogden, Utah. Durant reaching there first carried the construction to Promontory Point. The Central Pacific consequently was compelled to buy the

road from the Point to Ogden. May 10, 1869, the ceremony of uniting the east and west divisions was celebrated at Promontory Point. A golden spike was driven with a silver hammer into the last tie, of laurel wood. Omaha was wreathed in flags. The populace gathered on Capitol hill to celebrate the important event. Governor Saunders presided; he had been chairman at the initiatory ceremonies nearly six years before. A wire to Capitol hill announced the last stroke of the hammer at Promontory Point. Cannon boomed, bands played and speeches were made. It was a glorious day for Omaha. The ceremonies were concluded by the singing of the doxology. A message wired from the Utah ceremonies to President Grant read, "The last rail is laid, the last spike driven. The Pacific railroad is completed." The Omaha procession was a grand affair. In the evening the old Capitol building blazed with light, each of its windows illumined with candles. It was a fit ending of the old building, so soon to be demolished in making way for the high school—within its walls Pacific railroads had been discussed for years.

For some years transfer ferries were used to transport passengers, freight and cars across the Missouri River. The Union Pacific bridge was begun in 1868 and completed March 25, 1873. Until 1888 the Union Pacific dummy trains were the only means of reaching Council Bluffs. In that year the motor bridge was completed and Omaha and Council Bluffs celebrated

the event with a great procession across the new structure.

As soon as the Union Pacific was completed there began the greatest migration westward the world has probably ever witnessed. Within twenty years the roving tribes of Indians were practically annihilated, and the most inaccessible points brought within a few days' journey of Washington. The plains of Nebraska were everywhere dotted with new towns. Sportsmen from all over the country and from Europe were exterminating the big game. Wm. F. Cody, of North Platte, who had been nicknamed "Buffalo Bill," by the railroad gangs for his success in supplying them with buffalo meat, with others, reaped a rich harvest in heading sporting parties. The buffalo and the wild tribes have disappeared from the plains but the citizens of the East and Europe still suppose the "wild west shows" truly picture Nebraska of today. The great work of the Trans-Mississippi Exposition is to disabuse their minds of these false impressions.

On the opening of the Pacific road, the people and commerce of the world passed through Omaha's gates. By reason of its telegraphic supremacy the city early became headquarters for newspaper correspondents. The great West was then a fruitful field for alarms and sensations. Henry M. Stanley, represented the New York Herald and St. Louis Republican here. In the New York Herald of February 4, 1867, he wrote. "Omaha City, the capital of Nebraska and

terminus of the Union Pacific Railroad, is beautifully located on a high, level plateau, forty feet above the highest water mark, on the west bank of the Missouri. A low range of hills gradually rising to an elevation of eighty to one hundred feet above this plateau and about one mile from the river, affords fine locations for private residences. On one of these hills is the territorial capitol, surrounded by a park 600 feet square. The panoramic view from these hills, and especially from Capitol hill, is rarely if ever surpassed in picturesque beauty and grandeur. Below the city with its wide regular streets, business blocks, churches and buildings, there the railroad, winding from huge machine shops around the city, then cutting through the hills, passes on its way mills, warehouses and gardens. The eye then takes in the darkly colored river, making a great bend of ten or fifteen miles around Iowa bluffs, the steamboats coming, going or unloading freight and passengers on its banks, here and there a raft or log carried down by the current of the river. Three miles back of the river, directly east of Omaha, Council Bluffs, half hidden among the ravines leans up against the high walls of the green bluff. This charming view of the river and city, hill and plain affords a never ending source of pleasure to the beholders. Omaha is situated very nearly on an air line and almost between New York and San Francisco. Her commanding position as terminus of a railway destined to carry the great traffic between the

Atlantic and Pacific, probably to revolutionize the Chinese and Japanese trade of the world, gives her commercial advantages which in the last twelve months have doubled her population and which sooner or later will make her one of the leading cities of the great northwest. Preparations for building business blocks, churches and private dwellings next season are being made on a large scale, and although hundreds of mechanics are expected to arrive here in the spring, I doubt whether the supply will be equal to the demand."

Stanley not many years after took charge of the New York Herald's expedition to central Africa in search of the explorer Livingstone, which resulted successfully. During a lecture tour Mr. Stanley accompanied by his wife visited Omaha December 24, 1890, and was warmly received by his old-time friends. The next day being spent here, Mrs. Stanley chiefly interested herself in the spectacle of the children of the city missions eating their Christmas dinner.

These pages have been devoted to the doings of the common people. All officials are but representatives of citizens. Their reception in any other light or manner is unbecoming. Omaha in the early days of the Union Pacific was the stopping-off place, a place of "rest" for nearly all the representative people who crossed the continent.

King Kalakua of the Sandwich Islands (now known as Hawaii) arrived in the city January 21, 1875, on his homeward journey from a tour of the United States.

It was the first time a crowned head had come within the borders of the great republic since its founding. The party visited the High School, and in the evening a reception was held at the Grand Central Hotel. This hotel, since destroyed by fire, occupied the present site of the Paxton Hotel, and was the scene of public receptions for many years. King Kalakaua again visited here in 1881.

President Grant was the guest of the city, November 1, 1875. The President was introduced by Mayor Champion S. Chase to the children of the city and others gathered on the High School grounds. The great captain's quiet and unassuming ways are proverbial. He simply responded, "I am pleased to stand beneath the shadow of this building which is so well calculated to prepare you for useful occupations in life. His Honor, the Mayor, has said I am in favor of free speech, and therefore I want other people to do the talking."

November 3, 1879, General and Mrs. Grant arrived in Omaha on their homeward way in their tour around the world, and were met by Governor Nance and Mayor Chase. Members of the Grant family arriving from the East joined their parents here. The next day, Sunday, the party attended services at the First Methodist Church on Davenport street near Seventeenth, now the Salvation Army barracks.

Dom Pedro II, Emperor of Brazil, accompanied by three of his officials visited Omaha in 1876. He trav-

eled in an unassuming manner, registering at the hotels as Mr. "D. Pedro de Alcantara." At the High School grounds the emperor met with the young people. He was greatly interested in the smelting works. The industrial side of American life and his meeting with the poet Whittier are said to have given the progressive monarch greatest pleasure in his tour of the United States.

President Rutherford B. Hayes and wife came to the city September 3, 1880, and visited the High School, of course. At the suggestion of Mrs. Hayes they climbed into the tower to obtain the best view of the surrounding country. President Hayes had been an investor in Omaha real estate. Unknown to the President the building was leased for saloon purposes by the agent. Political enemies making capital of the incident—Mrs. Hayes was a leading advocate of temperance—the place at once was sold to the lessee "at a sacrifice." While driving about the city, the President asked to be shown the building. On catching sight of it, he called to Mrs. Hayes, "Lucy, there's your saloon."

The Marquis of Lorne, Governor General of Canada, with his wife, the Princess Louise, quietly came in 1882. Presidents Cleveland and Harrison were in turn official visitors. Harrison and President McKinley have both visited the shrine—High School hill—and spoken there for the edification of the boys and girls and voters and voter's wives.

CHAPTER XX.

MODERN OMAHA.

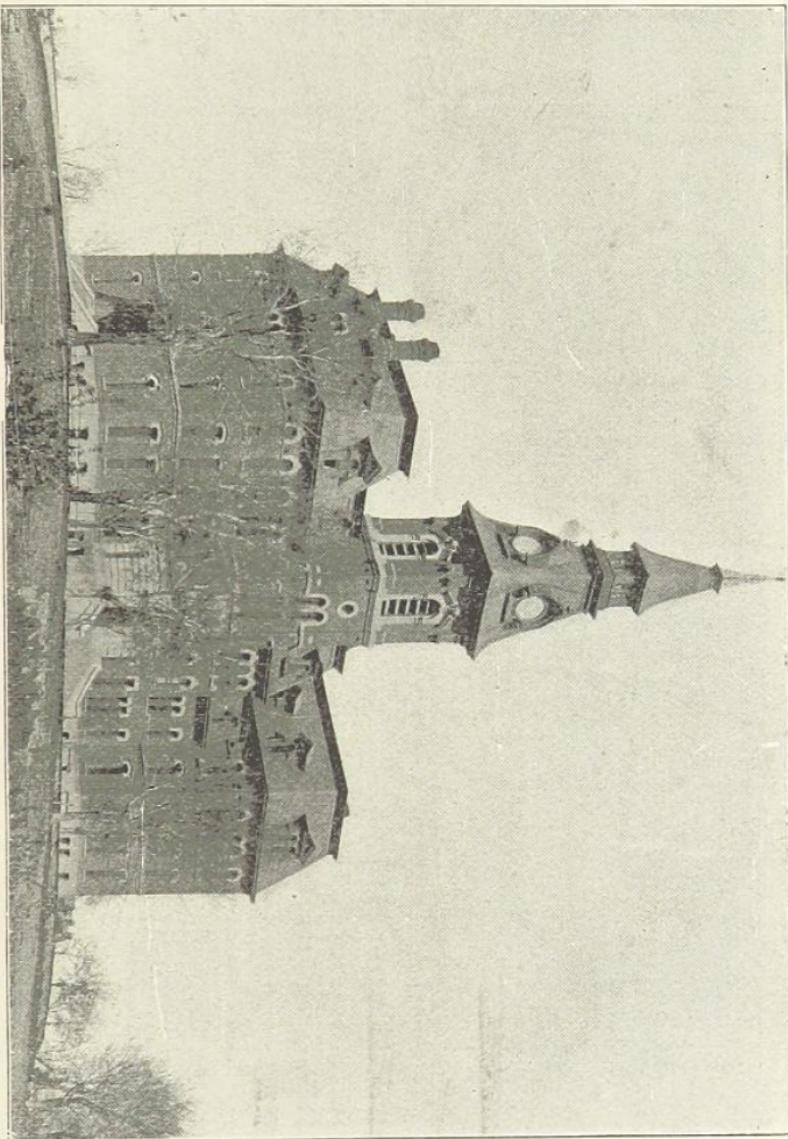
THE Omaha of today is a distributing center for the great West. The packing industries have continued to enlarge so rapidly that the city now ranks as the third packing center in the Union. It is hardly known at this day that Albany, New York, was once the "porkopolis" of the country. Detroit soon assumed to be the center of the business; then Cincinnati; then Chicago. The growth of Omaha and Kansas City is the result of a movement of the packing industry to the base of supply—the cornfields of the West. Nebraska is the great corn State, and this naturally accounts for the up-building of the industry at South Omaha. This town had its beginning in 1882. Its location is the result of foresight, the natural drainage of the place, and its convenient distance both to and from the metropolis with competing railroads make South Omaha a natural packing center.

One of the largest smelting plants in the world has been for years a source of great commercial strength to Omaha. Vast wealth in all the precious metals continually coming from the West in ores pass on, refined, into the markets of the world. The smelter has been a boon for many a foreigner who

with his savings earned here has gone out on the plains and set up in life as a farmer.

The building boom of the "eighties," the beginning of an era of the beautiful and massive in Western architecture, has created here a new city, often a surprise to the traveler. The wide business streets are advantageous to architectural display, the clear, dry atmosphere lending to their preservation. It would be difficult to find a prettier view of public buildings intermingled with business fronts than that from Eighteenth street looking down Farnam street, Omaha. The red granite City Hall gathers beauty from its proximity to the dark brown granite and brick Bee building, one of the most magnificent and substantial business blocks in the country. The New York Life Insurance building towers in the center of the scene, a shaft to beautify the whole picture, and the Commercial National bank is a pure gem in the setting. The Douglas County court house, still handsome, represents the beginning of the new era. A new Postoffice and Federal Court building occupying its own block tell in its grandeur the importance of the city to the country at large. The public library, free to all citizens, happily indicates the public taste by a large patronage. Lininger's art gallery, public at stated intervals, adds much to the common good. The great Trans-Mississippi exposition illustrates Western progress and Omaha's share in the development of the good, the true and the beautiful.



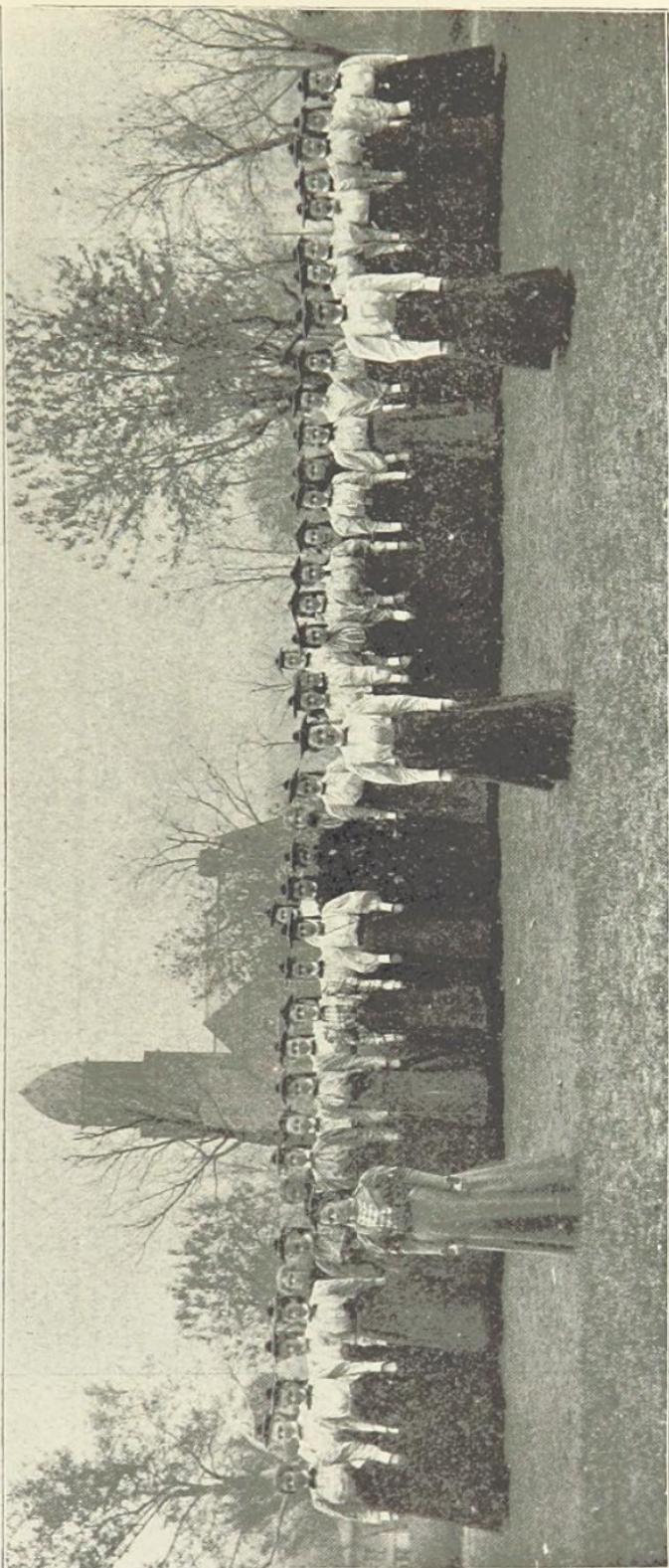


OMAHA HIGH SCHOOL.



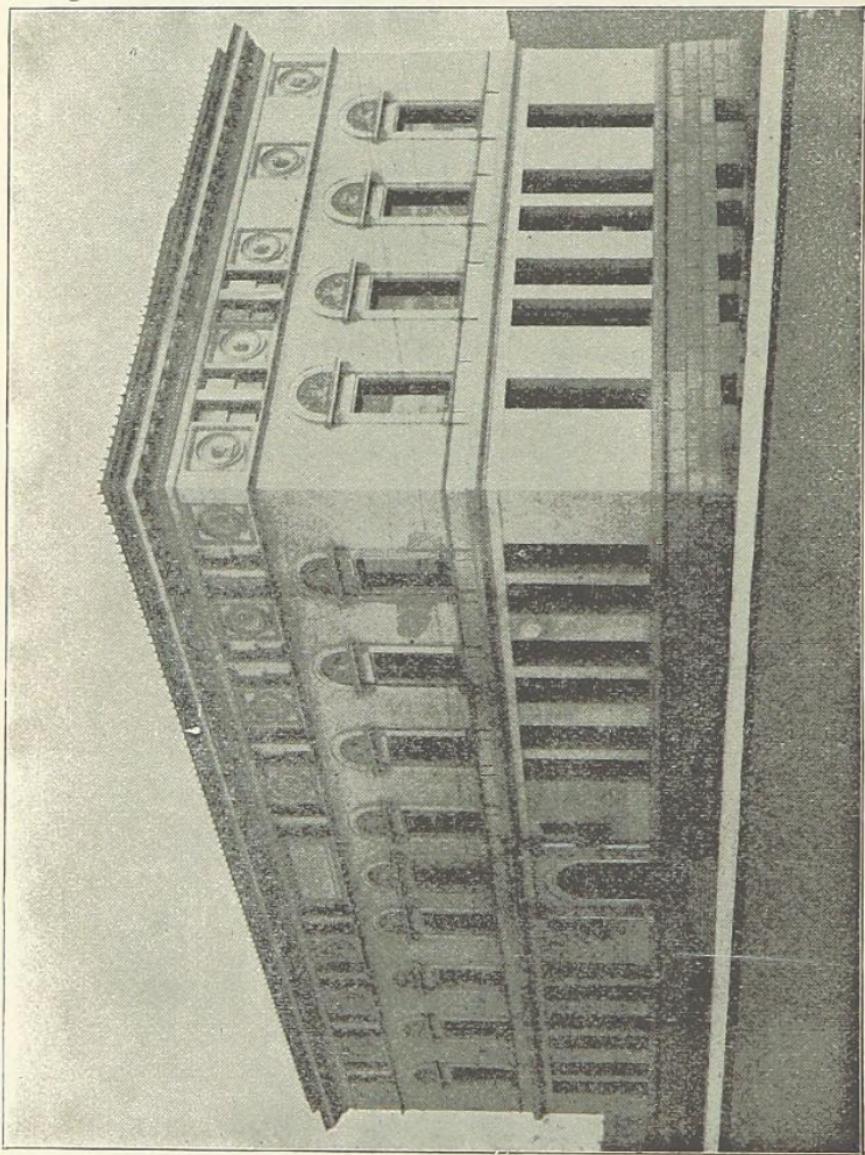
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"COMPANY Z," OMAHA HIGH SCHOOL CADETS.

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VIEW FROM EIGHTEENTH AND FARNAM, LOOKING EAST—Pen drawing after photograph. (See page 110.)

D. C. DUNLAP
Engraver—OMAHA



